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SIGHT AND SOUND

SUMMER 1936
VOL. 5. NO 18



ELEPHANT BOY
(United Artists)

On the 1st of every month

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world FILM news

AND TELEVISION PROGRESS

(Incorporating "Cinema Quarterly")

WORLD FILM NEWS is the monthly magazine about films and the men who make them. In its new form, it is 52 pages, profusely illustrated, price 1/- . In the July issue, Graham Greene contributes an article on *The Genius of Peter Lorre*. Four pages are devoted to the Russian Cinema as it is to-day. Marie Seton writes about Denham, and Winifred Holmes on the Chinese Film Industry. This issue contains a special "RADIO AND TELEVISION" Supplement, to which contributors include Bernard Shaw, Stephen King-Hall, I. A. Jacoby and A. W. Hanson (organiser of the "In Town To-night" talks).

Two features introduced recently which will appear regularly are the REVIEW OF REVIEWS and the SPECIALISED FILM GUIDE. The latter tells you where you can see the best Continental, Documentary and other Specialised films each month in London and the provinces. (To give examples, the July issue booking-dates include those of :—"The March of Time," Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8 ; Night Mail ; The Birth of The Robot (latest colour film for Shell) ; The World Rolls On (prestige film for Dunlop Rubber Co.) ; Sans Famille ; The Student of Prague.

Features of special interest in the August issue include an article on "The Unknown Wealth of the Home Libraries," a special feature on Indian films, four pages on Films, and more news from the U.S.S.R. Educational and Social Service. WORLD FILM NEWS is the official organ of the Federation of Film Societies, and as the new season is approaching, news and views of film societies will receive a very prominent place in its pages. The subscription is 15/- per annum, and 10/- only for film society members. Send your subscription, or 1/2 for a specimen copy of the current issue NOW to :—

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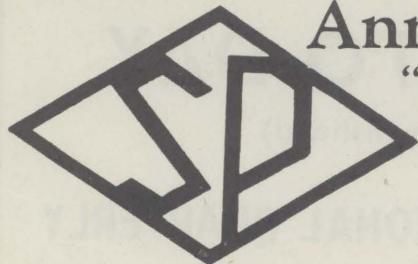
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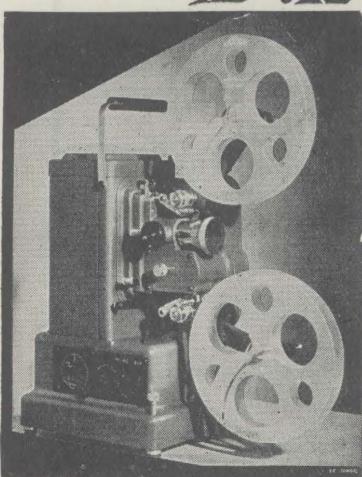
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SIGHT AND SOUND

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VOLUME 5, No. 18

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FILMS FOR CHILDREN

HERE are between five and six million children between the age of five and sixteen at school in this country. In most districts children under sixteen are not admitted, or are not supposed to be admitted, to cinemas during the showing of an "A" film unless they are accompanied by a parent or a responsible adult. Most cinema programmes consist of two feature films; the larger proportion of feature films bear an "A" certificate and most programmes usually consist of one "A" film and one "U" film. "A" films are generally to be regarded as unsuitable for children, but final responsibility is left with their parents. "U" films are regarded as not unsuitable or as harmless for children. It is natural that, in general, films should be produced and cinemas run in

the interests of adults since they form the larger proportion of cinemagoers. In some districts, however, local cinema managers organise children's matinees, but the programmes shown at them usually consist of whatever "U" films happen to be in the programme for the week. Only in a few districts have children's matinees been organised, often by teachers and cinema managers in co-operation, for which the films are carefully selected as being positively suitable for children. But the efforts which have been made until now to provide film programmes specifically for children have been negligible in comparison with the number of children to be catered for and the opportunities (and dangers) latent in the attendance of children at cinemas as their main form of entertainment.

The recent meeting of the Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations and the conference in London called by the Public Morality Council and the Cinema Christian Council, and the public interest aroused by these meetings show that educational, social and film trade organisations recognise the need for constructive and positive efforts, based on real information and understanding, to ensure, not so much that children come to no harm in the cinema, but that they obtain good entertainment suitable to their age and needs. "Nothing but the best" as was stated at a recent conference "is good enough for them."

From organised enquiries among children, from observation at cinemas, and from the experience of those who have tried to cater specifically for children, we know what, in general, children like and dislike. They like to be interested, excited, and amused. They do not like to be frightened or bored. We know that many "U" films, although harmless, bore them because, for example, the stories are too involved or too wordy and, on the other hand, that they often lack just those elements of action, suspense, and excitement which children desire and which they can find in "A" films which may, in other respects, be unsuitable for them.

We know, also, that children like films "of real life," films based on history, and films of well-known books which they read. Films of these types are from time to time produced, but they are produced for adults, and not for children, who seem to have more exacting standards than many of their parents. It is probable that their expressed dislike, for example, for Mae West or Frankenstein films is due to the fact that children are unable, or unwilling, either from experience or by imagination, to comprehend such phenomena as part of real life. On the other hand, free adaptations or blatant alterations of stories which children have read or of history as they know it, seriously affect the entertainment value for children of films based on well known stories and history. They cannot appreciate the adult reasons which justify such alterations. In view of the vivid and lasting impression made on children by films it is

desirable that such discrimination should be encouraged and satisfied.

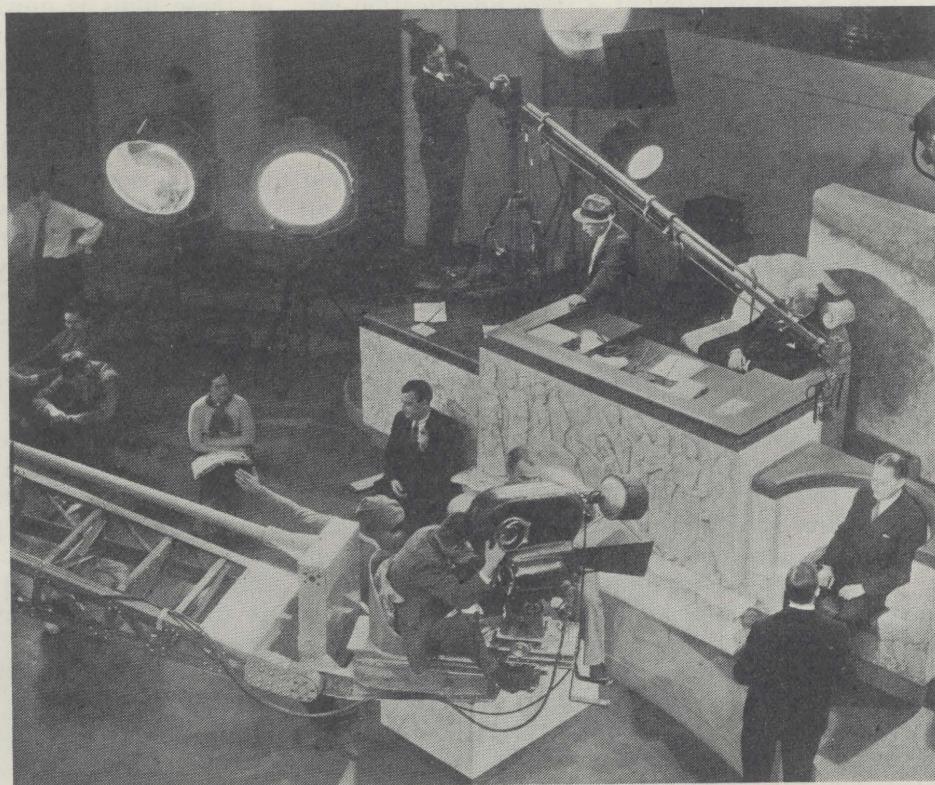
The specific films which children like may be G-men films this year, or air films last year, or whatever other cycle the adult cinema happens to be passing through. But the basic elements of appeal are the same. Occasionally they are found in films which are not only free from any possibly harmful associations and from ideas too mature for children, but which also present real pictures of subjects, peoples, and countries in which children are interested and activities and qualities which, at school, they have been taught to admire and emulate. These are the types of films which would seem to be positively suitable for children during the impressionable years between five and sixteen.

The Governors of the British Film Institute have decided to arrange a conference, early in the autumn, of educational, social, and film trade organisations to see what practical and concrete methods can be found to provide first-class cinema entertainment for children. More information is obviously needed on many points; for example, on the extent of child cinema-going and on how often they do, in fact, go to cinemas accompanied by parents and how often they go alone. More scientific examination is needed of the film likes and dislikes of children in the light of modern psychological and educational theory and practice.

With increased knowledge and realisation of the size and urgency of the problem, and assuming full co-operation between the public and the film trade, it should be possible to evolve methods which might lead in time to the provision of children's films and children's cinemas, just as there are children's books and children's libraries.

In calling the conference, the Governors of the British Film Institute are not seeking to prove any pre-conceived theory, but to ascertain facts. Action devised to ensure good and suitable entertainment at the cinema both for children and adults, if it is to succeed, must be based on facts. The solution of this urgent problem should be in the best interests of cinemagoers and film trade alike.

On the set for THE
WITNESS CHAIR
(Radio)



NEWS OF THE QUARTER

The Quota Committee

THE first volume of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Board of Trade Departmental Committee on Cinematograph Films was published on 20th June. It contains the evidence submitted by the Board of Trade itself on the working of the Cinematograph Film Act, 1927, and memoranda put forward by the Associated Realist Film Producers, Ltd., the Association of Cine-Technicians, the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, and the Film Producers' Group of the Federation of British Industries. The Evidence published also includes detailed reports of the questions put to the various representatives by the members of the Committee and the answers given, and amounts in all to a report of about 100,000 words. The evidence is obtainable from the Stationery Office, price nine shillings. It is anticipated that the evidence presented by the Kinematograph Renters' Society, the National Association of Theatrical Employees, Denning Films, Ace Films, the Film Society, Mr. Simon Rowson, Mr. H. Bruce Woolfe and Mr. John Grierson, will be published together in a further volume. Mr. John Maxwell, Chairman of Associated British Picture Corporation, resigned from the Film Group of the F.B.I. as a protest against the memorandum presented by the Film Group, and has made his views known to the Departmental Committee.

The Board of Trade presented figures of foreign and British films registered by distributors and exhibited by exhibitors and of defaults from quota requirements for the years 1929-1936. Although the Board had received information from many sources that the Sections of the Act on blind and advance booking had been widely contravened, it had been possible to take legal proceedings in only one case. The Board's evidence also referred to quota legislation in other parts of the British Empire, to the position of sub-standard films under the Act, and to the showing of quota films in the mornings to empty cinemas when the only people present were charwomen. The A.R.F.P. asked for the inclusion of documentaries for quota and the balancing of all foreign short films by British short films instead of by British long films as was at present permissible. They also asked for a special sub-committee of the Advisory Committee to the Board to consider documentary films.

The A.C.T. proposed a minimum price qualification of £12,000, or £2 per foot; renters' maximum quota to be 25 per cent. and exhibitors' 50 per cent. of the renters'; and inclusion of documentaries for quota. The C.E.A. proposed that exhibitors' quota should be reduced to 10 per cent., and that a range of two films from which an exhibitor might select one should be the basis of any new legislation.

The C.E.A. did not favour a price qualification for quota but urged the establishment of a committee to assess quality. The Film Producers' Group of the F.B.I. proposed that with reference to renters' quota there should be three classes of British long films, (1) films costing less than 15s. per foot, with a maximum requirement of £4,500, to be ineligible for renters' quota; (2) films costing less than a total of £2,500 per 1,000 ft. reel with a maximum requirement of £15,000, to be marked on exhibition as "*A Renters' Quota Film acquired by Messrs. to enable them to distribute foreign films*"; (3) films costing more than £2,500 per 1,000 ft. reel not to be registered for renters' quota, and not to carry any special description. For exhibitors' quota all British long films should be eligible irrespective of cost and whether or not they were also registered for renters' quota. The Film Group urged that the quota of British films should in future be a percentage of the total of foreign films acquired or exhibited instead of a percentage of the total of all films; British and foreign. They proposed that renters' quota, thus calculated, should rise from 29 per cent., in the first year of the new Act, to 54 per cent. in the sixth to tenth years and that exhibitors' quota should rise from 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. in the same period. Documentaries should be given quota. Attention was drawn to "barring clauses" and to the evasion of block, blind and advance booking by "gentlemen's agreements."

The Evidence provides a mass of information on the organisation and operation of the film industry in this country which is more valuable than a dozen theoretical books on the art of the cinema, and which is essential to any proper appreciation of the film industry to-day and of the problems and difficulties facing the industry itself and those who have any theories about further contributions which the cinema might make to the national life.

A Clean Screen

AT the Conference of the C.E.A., Lord Tyrrell presented what was, in effect, the annual report for 1935 of the British Board of Film Censors. He stated that of 2,100 films examined, 350 were passed with an "A" certificate and 1,750 with a "U" certificate; he anticipated that the exhibitors would be gratified to hear that 83 per cent. of the total number of films submitted had been passed for Universal exhibition. Exception was taken to 360 films, which was about 50 per cent. less than the previous year and, generally speaking, incidents to which exception was taken were of a far less serious character than they were even two years before. Lord Tyrrell stated that the "horrific" films had now ceased, and that the "horrific" category which had been given a trial by the Board had now ceased to exist. He referred to the increasing number of films in which hospital scenes are introduced, showing intimate details and "scenes and incidents which are usually kept sacred, in our public hospitals and institutions." He expressed the belief that "the cumulative effect

of these films is unwholesome; they certainly do not cater for the relaxation which the majority of audiences desire to-day." Certain European films, acclaimed as possessing some outstanding merit and mostly intended for exhibition in a few special cinemas, had required drastic cutting. The artistic merit, in some cases, could not be denied, but unfortunately there was coupled with it incidents and scenes which were quite objectionable and prohibitive. Lord Tyrrell's remarks and warning on the intrusion of politics into films are reported elsewhere in this issue. Concluding, he stated that "a continuing clean screen will lead eventually to heights of popularity which we at the moment can hardly visualise." Lord Tyrrell would have given a clearer picture of the position in relation to "A" and "U" films if he had given the figures for long films and short films separately. Long films occupy the greatest part of the screen time at any cinema, except at the few news theatres. Of the 2,100 films examined by the Board, only some 700 at the outside can have been long films. The great majority of "shorts" obtain a "U" certificate. It would have been interesting to know how many of the 350 films given an "A" certificate were long films.

Increasing Cinema Audiences

MR. S. ROWSON, the film industry statistician, informed the C.E.A. Conference that he had calculated that of the 35 million people in Great Britain over 15 the average number of people every week who do not go to any cinema was 20-21 millions. "For every two eligible persons who go to the cinema there are three who do not." Average weekly attendance had risen in 1935 by 5 per cent. from 18½ millions to 19½ millions. The rate of increase was not being maintained, and he anticipated that the figure for 1936 would be something under 20 millions. These figures represented about 14 million persons who attended the cinema, some once, others two or three times, a week. Mr. Rowson went on to propose a co-operative advertising campaign by the film trade to impress on the 21 millions who never go to the cinema that "nowadays the cinema makes a full appeal to every class and that, like a Disney cartoon, everyone without exception can usually derive pleasure and amusement in it." He was confident that the 21 million non-attenders would, if it were brought to their notice by such a campaign as he suggested, respond to the improvement in intrinsic quality of films—technical and moral—which had been made since 1934. "The Cinema," Mr. Rowson asserted, "is truly entitled to regard itself as the people's university; and its effect upon all who come under its influence is to add to their knowledge of life and its problems." . . . "Better screen fare will usually be responded to by increased attendances and increased attendances can, in general, be secured only by providing better screen fare." . . . "We owe it to ourselves to see, not merely that no objectionable influence should be permitted on our screens or in the conduct of our cinemas, but

that we should seriously consider in what ways the film's influence can be employed for advancing the good of the nation at large."

Redundancy or Progress

THE suggestion that the problems of Redundancy, or overbuilding of cinemas, should be submitted to the Board of Trade was made by Mr. K. A. Nyman, Chairman of the London and Home Counties branch of the C.E.A., at the C.E.A. Conference. He admitted the disadvantages of referring what would seem to be a purely trade matter to the Government, but submitted that this would prove to be the only effective method of dealing with the matter. Competition, if allowed to become excessive, Mr. Nyman contended, must result in disaster not only for the exhibitors but also for the consumers, who will find themselves compelled to see bad films, as the demand for films is increased by an increasing number of cinemas all intent on attracting patronage by offering a different programme from the cinema next door. The difficulty was to assess and prove redundancy in any particular area. Too often the opinion of an exhibitor seemed to be "If I build a cinema against you, that is progress, but if you build a cinema against me, that is redundancy." Mr. Nyman suggested that "no claim of alleged redundancy can be made unless there is a sufficiency of seats (under reasonable conditions of comfort and hygiene) available to the needs of a district, provided that the cinemas at which these seats are available exhibit between them all the more attractive films which the public desire to see." In addition to the approach to the Board of Trade Mr. Nyman suggested that a joint Tribunal of the C.E.A. and the Kinematograph Renters' Society should be formed; that every Licensing Authority should be asked to receive a deputation from the C.E.A. on the general question of Redundancy instead of local branches waiting for specific cases which might arise; that if a licence was granted to a cinema which, after proper enquiry, had been judged redundant, such a cinema should not be admitted as a member of the C.E.A. The number of active cinemas in Great Britain at the end of 1934 was, according to Mr. Rowson, 4,305; the seating capacity of these cinemas was 3,872,000. These figures are substantiated by the Board of Trade. Taking all cinemas into consideration, with their varying times of opening, lengths of programme and changes of programme, Mr. Rowson has come to the conclusion that "Assuming that all the houses are open only in the evenings and run their programmes twice daily and for runs of three days, the number of seats available could accommodate two-thirds of the entire population aged 15 and over each half-week." These figures and estimates should be compared with the estimates of the actual cinema-going public given by Mr. Rowson at the recent C.E.A. Conference.

Censorship in France

As a result of a decree signed on May 7th every film exhibited in France, and every film intended for

export must obtain a certificate from the Ministry for National Education. In viewing films the points to be kept in mind are national interest, morals, and respect for national traditions. A special committee attached to the Department of Fine Arts will advise on the granting of certificates. The Committee will include representatives of all Government Departments, and it may co-opt any additional persons required by the special nature of any particular film. News reels will not have to be submitted but they will be subject to supervision. All speeches and statements by persons filmed must be recorded when the film is taken and no sound may be post-synchronised. Certificates may be refused to foreign films, in themselves not offensive, if the producer of them has publicly shown outside of France films considered contrary to French interests.

The French Film Industry

French film production has dropped from 157 films in 1933 to 109 in 1935. These 109 films were produced by 83 companies. The import of dubbed films into France has increased from 143 in 1933 to 251 in 1935; 193 of the films imported in 1935 were American. In France and Northern Africa there are about 4,500 cinemas of which about 3,000 are equipped for sound films. French film exports are negligible. According to the Petsche report of the Finance Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, out of every three films produced in France, one shows a profit, one just pays its way, one shows a definite loss. Since the failure of the National Bank of Credit the State has become principal creditor of the Gaumont Franco-Film Aubert to the amount of about 300 million francs. Mr. Maurice Petsche introduced a private Bill in the first half of 1935 inviting the Government to establish a National Cinema Fund in order to recover the debt owing to the State and to safeguard the future of the French film industry. The Fund was to be used for advancing money for the equipping of silent cinemas with sound apparatus, for production, and for increasing film export. The Fund was to be chiefly financed by being given the exclusive right to import and distribute foreign films and by drawing 10 per cent. of royalties received from holders of licences for sound apparatus. No action has yet been taken along these lines. Paul Faure, general secretary of the Socialist Party in France, which came into power on June 1st, in an interview suggested the possibility of the French film industry being nationalised.

Spain and Insulting Films

Agreements have been concluded between Spain and Peru, Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua to control the exhibition in these countries of films which are considered disparaging to any of them. According to the text of the agreement between Spain and El Salvador, for example, the countries agree to consider as insulting and not to admit for public exhibition films that attack, slander, defame, ridicule, offend and disfigure, directly or indirectly, the habits and customs, institutions, dress, charac-

teristics, peculiarities or acts of Spain or El Salvador. They also agree that when a foreign company produces new insulting films the countries shall prohibit the exhibition of all the films made by the offending company. Information about insulting films will be conveyed through diplomatic representatives and both governments will proceed immediately to apply the appropriate sanctions.

In November 1935, as a result of protests by the Spanish Government Paramount agreed to burn the negative of *The Devil is a Woman*, the Marlene Dietrich film set in Spain, in the presence of the Spanish diplomatic representative in Washington. Spain had threatened to bar all future Paramount productions.

Film Institute for Canada ?

The Report on Educational and Cultural Films in Canada, prepared by the National Film Society of Canada and financed by the Canadian Committee of the Carnegie Corporation, has now been published and may be obtained from the Secretary, Mr. D. W. Buchanan, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa (price 25 cents). The Report surveys the existing film activities in Canada, the various methods of using films for educational and cultural purposes, and the existing production and distribution of educational films in Canada. It recommends the following steps: the establishment of a national clearing house for information on the lines of the British Film Institute; co-operation with other national Institutes and Libraries; establishment of film societies on the lines of the Merseyside Film Institute Society; the formation of a National Film Museum and regional libraries of educational films; the training of teachers to an appreciation of the value of the film as a didactic instrument. The Report is signed by a large number of educationists, representing Government departments, universities, and national organisations for all types of education. It contains a foreword by Lord Tweedsmuir, who has shown his continued interest in the work which he so greatly assisted as a Governor of the British Film Institute by becoming Honorary President of the National Film Society of Canada.

Film Libraries in the Empire

16 mm. educational films for use in schools are now being acquired by the Library established by the Government of the Union of South Africa. The Education Department for South Australia has purchased 50 16 mm. silent films for its Library of films for use in schools. The Commonwealth Government of Australia has established a National Historical Film and Speaking Record section as part of the Commonwealth National Library at Canberra "to secure and preserve permanently approved historical films and sound recordings, including gramophone records." The Director of Education for Palestine has started to form a library of 16 mm. educational films for use in

schools and villages throughout Palestine. The Directors of Education for Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika Territory, and Zanzibar at their 1936 Conference decided to enquire into the possibilities of establishing a circulating library of educational films for the common use of the four territories.

The British Film Institute has been enabled by the generosity of Cadbury Brothers Ltd., to present to the libraries in South Africa, Australia, and Palestine a 16mm. copy of *Cocoa from the Gold Coast*, the one-reel geography film made by Cadbury Brothers Ltd. to the specifications of the Geography Committee of the Institute.

The Death of Mr. Will Day.

Mr. Will Day's sudden death has ended a career of unique significance in the history of cinematography. For some forty years Mr. Day was connected actively with the showing of films and the engineering side of the film business, but, in addition to this, he found time for an astonishing amount of research into the history and development of cinematography. He had to his credit numerous patents in the field of colour cinematography, sound recording, and television. But probably the activity which was nearest his heart was his superb collection of historical apparatus, part of which is on view at the Science Museum, South Kensington. This collection and the encyclopaedic book on the history of cinematography, which he had ready for publication, should stand as monuments of his unstinted enthusiasm for cinematography. It is to be hoped that the collection will be kept together for public exhibition in this country and that the contents of his book will be made available to the wide public which now interests itself in everything relating to the film.

B.F.I.'s New General Manager

Mr. Oliver Bell has succeeded Mr. J. W. Brown as General Manager of the British Film Institute. He took up his duties on July 1st. Mr. Bell is essentially a man of affairs. He has had experience in many fields during the course of his career. After serving with the R.F.C. and the R.A.F. during the War, he came down from Oxford in 1922. He then joined the staff of the League of Nations Union and subsequently became connected with the British National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. In the course of his duties with this body he paid many visits to Geneva, Paris, and Rome where he came into contact with the International Institute of Educational Cinematography. At the same time, he met many of the best known statesmen and savants of the day. He was also associated with the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films. During the last two years Mr. Bell has been engaged in political journalism. In wishing him well we feel sure that with the advent of a fresh mind and fresh ideas the activities of the British Film Institute will be considerably and usefully developed. Mr. William Farr is continuing his work with the Institute as Assistant General Manager.



THE MAN WHO COULD WORK MIRACLES, by H. G. Wells

(United Artists)

THE NEW RENAISSANCE

Winifred Holmes discusses the pros and cons of filming literary classics

AN enterprising publisher with an astute knowledge of human nature once produced a library of re-prints called *The Hundred Best Books*. Imagine the excitement of discovering them, at the age of sixteen, in a primitive frame hotel on the lonely Tasmanian coast! Imagine too, how they were attacked and devoured—*The Woman in White*, *The Moonstone*, *Ivanhoe*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Virginians*! Imagine also the warmly superior sense of being a Best Person living on a steady diet of the World's Best Books! Whoever he may have been, that publisher was indeed an astute man.

Hollywood is following his lead. Best films made from best literature is the order of the day. The movies nowadays have not only grown respectable, but are capped and gowned. Literature is an academic subject; here we offer you, ladies and gentlemen, a short cut to culture, with good entertainment value thrown in. A film made from a

classic *must* be good—in both senses of the word. That is the implication. Hence we've had Shakespeare—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Dickens—*David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist*; Tolstoy—*Anna Karenina*; Edgar Allan Poe—*The Raven*; Dostoevsky—*Crime and Punishment*; Thackeray—*Becky Sharp*; Stevenson—*Treasure Island*; Barrie—*Little Minister*; Charlotte Brontë—*Jane Eyre*, and so on.

Upward trend of public taste

This new policy was commented on by the Will Hays Motion Picture Industry Report, 1933:—"The production of pictures based on the major and minor classics of literature is one of the leading trends in motion picture entertainment for the coming season. Such pictures promise to become an integral part of screen entertainment . . . they are attracting new audiences . . ."

During the year 1934, the sources of film stories were proportionately 40 per cent. original screen plays, 19.5 per cent. adapted from stage plays, and as much as 40.5 per cent. taken from "classics, novels and short stories." During 1935 the number of such adaptations from literature were still greater, and the industry patted itself on the back yet more heartily . . . "feature pictures based on great works of classical literature are setting a new high mark of entertainment quality." "Upward trend of public taste . . . advance in quality corresponds to fundamental social changes affecting the popular taste . . . no restraint after World War . . . economic depression had a sobering effect."

This rush into literature is not without virtue, however much we may deplore the way our favourite books are treated, or our dearest friends portrayed by the stars of the screen. It gives people a better sense of human values than in the old days of the stock film characters—the innocent country girl who goes to the city to run into the blandishments of the sleek rich villain; the poor young man, faithful through all, who follows her and, making good, finally escorts her in a blaze of flowers to the altar; the dear old mother who waits at home, and so forth . . . It also leads many people from trash to books of merit, or even into the world of books at all. An Ohio newspaper states:—"The recent avalanche of improving motion pictures has sent hundreds of enthusiasts to the library, seeking the stories they have seen on the screen. If anyone doubts the power of the moving picture as an educating factor he should witness the varied types of borrowers demanding *The Fountain*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Great Expectations*, and many others."

Study circles have been instituted in different parts of the United States to back up these literature films, while they are taken seriously by educationalists as a useful contribution to school curricula. But is it *really* a good thing to take a work of art and adapt it to another medium which uses a different method of presentation altogether?

Good novels—poor films

The traditional novel of the past two centuries is a leisurely study of character, circumstance, condition, and the building up of incident and action consequent on these factors. Film can permit itself no such thoroughness or slow accumulation. Character, type, is seen in a flash; people must act swiftly, and by their action reveal their psychological attitudes. Background is background—uncompromising, taken for granted, not built up by small touches and collection of detail. The characters must speak for themselves, act without explanation from their creators.

Therefore, the plot of a story taken from a novel may seem, instead of irrevocable, with the characters behaving in a particular way because they cannot help themselves, forced and arbitrary, even extravagant. The celluloid *Becky Sharp* is a mass of contradictions, unconvincing in both good and bad

sides to her nature, instead of a whole person as she is in *Vanity Fair*, clear-cut and real. *Anna Karenina*, the film, for all its excellent acting and setting became merely a rather sordid and commonplace triangle. The pathos of the rude mechanicals in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* became bathos; *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, a sentimental treatise on schoolboy heroism.

Contrast the lucidity and swift-moving climaxes of *The Man Who Knew Too Much* with another Hitchcock film, *Secret Agent*, which is muddled and without clear issues. The first was written direct for the screen; the second adapted from an excellent story by Somerset Maugham. It is amusing to speculate on what the 5,000 people who bought the film edition of *Crime and Punishment* made of it after seeing Hollywood's glamorous version or the sordid realism of the French film. The latter was a far better attempt to get the true atmosphere, motives and characterisation of the book, but neither had the opportunity or ability to analyse the murderer's pathology—the whole *raison d'être* of Dostoevsky's terrific work.

Here the question is raised: is it better to get a garbled version of a masterpiece of literature or no version at all? Under the guise of entertainment, are people who have never read the classics benefiting by seeing a kind of *Told to the Children* transcript? Is a cheapened visual story better than no story at all, when it comes to the great books of the world? No compromise at all, is my own conclusion.

A new literary form?

"Rose-lily, lily-rose"—literature-films are here in force; there is also the new phenomenon of film-literature. The form it first took was a script or scripts of popular films published as books. For instance, Ernest Betts' editions of *The Private Life of Henry VIII* and *Jew Suss*. These little Methuen volumes would conceivably interest people who had first seen a film and wished to refresh their memory after with its dialogues and situations. They would also interest the student who wanted to learn about making films and writing scripts. But for ordinary reading they are dull and scrappy—telling their story in jerks and jolts, with little narrative continuity and no felicity of word or phrase.

But the treatments by Wells of his films *Things to Come* and *Man Who Could Work Miracles* are in a different category altogether. The genius of Wells as a writer, which at its best is dramatic, and at its worst heavily discursive, has seized upon an ideal method of presenting his fantasies. *The Shape of Things to Come* was clumsy, intolerably long, and redundant. His film version, while losing much of the argument, is, on the other hand, taut, tense, dramatic and full of point. *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* is as amusing, well-written and original a book as one could wish for. There is no reason why the English novel should continue to be poured into the same mould that it has been poured into for such a long

time. Film treatment shape may give it new vitality.

Poetry and the film

There is another branch of literature which may not only find a fresh outlet in films, but have power to modify and influence them. It is poetry. Under John Grierson's production, poetry was first used in a film last year. For *Coal Face*, a documentary short, Auden wrote a stanza of verse to be used as an adjunct to the pictures on the screen and the accompanying natural sound. It was not a success used in this way. Partly because it was not an integral part of the film: it cut across it, as it were; and chiefly because the words could hardly be distinguished above the rest of the sound.

The experiment was tried again and triumphed in *Night Mail*. Here Auden's verse is part of the film, as integral a part as the dialogue and music. It is in the train's rhythm, and every word can be heard and is important in building up a cumulative effect. The effect is tremendous. From material actuality the poet takes us away into a different dimension. We are affected personally, yet the film gains universality from it. There is a strong emotional pull with it. At the end, we too wait for the postman's knock; "for who can bear to feel himself forgotten?"

Poets are being called in to contribute to other films. Humbert Wolfe has translated *Cyrano de Bergerac* for Alexander Korda into rhymed English verse. The intention is to use it wherever possible

and effective in the *Cyrano* film. There will also be verse in the National Book Council's film *Preface to Life*.

Poetry may once again come out of its hiding-place in little books, read only by the few, and appeal to the public as it did in the Elizabethan heyday.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMES

In co-operation with the film trade the London Head Teachers' Association is planning an interesting experiment. Starting in October a series of Saturday morning shows is to be given in selected areas north and south of the Thames, where there is a large population of school children. Programmes will be suggested by the trade, and the proposed films will be seen by panels of teachers, assisted by persons nominated by the British Film Institute. Subject to the agreement of the panels and the introduction of any cuts that they may suggest, the programmes will then be presented and the children will be told of them by their teachers before they go home for the week-end. The full weight of the schools organisation and of the teaching profession is being placed behind the experiment. We trust that the film trade will have no cause to regret their experiment as the result of box office returns and that the London Head Teachers' Association may find that they have hit upon a useful scheme for helping to solve the problem of children's entertainment at the cinema.



Filming in the British Museum for *PREFACE TO LIFE*

(Strand)

AMERICA'S UNIVERSAL ENTERTAINMENT SERVICE

Mr. Robert Herring, editor of *Life and Letters To-day* and film critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, looks through the Will Hay's Report for 1935

EACH year, Mr. Will Hays makes his annual report to the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (Inc.). Each year, he finds cause to congratulate all concerned on the marked improvement of their wares. Annually, I wonder how he can continue, in face of facts, to arrive at so complacent a conclusion. This year the matter is complicated by the publication of *The Movies on Trial*, which enables us to read, side by side with Mr. Hays' grand opening,

"From the standpoint of entertainment, social and educational merit, motion picture production reached a new peak this year,"

the somewhat opposing statement of the Most Reverend John J. Cantwell that

"An examination of a number of the motion pictures recently released for public exhibition suggests that the entire motion-picture industry has set itself to the task of seeing which company can produce the most vicious films."

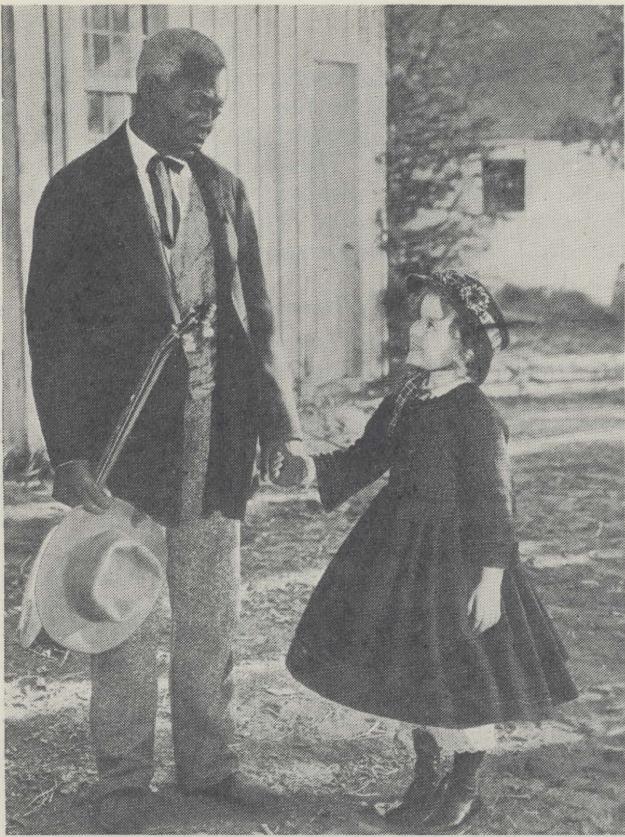
The Producers' Association didn't like the idea of this book ; they thought it would contain "much material that is derogatory to the motion picture industry." They were right about that, but the point, to a European critic, is—which is right about the American cinema ? I find it hardly probable that the authors in *The Movies on Trial* should be. The Most Reverend John J. Cantwell, to take him again, appears to think it both fair and useful to base conclusions on "a number of pictures selected at random" which, he informs us, "measure up *something like this*" (the italics are mine), "to probably one-fourth of the talking motion pictures made in the United States are based upon gross sexual irregularities." We do not, in Europe, see all the pictures made in America ; but this seems so high a percentage that one would have liked the Most Reverend John J. Cantwell to have arrived at it a little more carefully. His remarks, like those of several in the book, have, however, the effect of making me much more conscious of sex than do the films attacked. When I look for other grounds of complaint, I find William Allen White stating that "Out of three hundred pictures released in the last four or five months, about fifteen or twenty, at the utmost, could be recommended to the discriminating movie-goer." He does not say which they are, so I cannot judge his taste or compare them with Mr. Hays' list. The writer on "Stories I'd Like to See Screened" is out of date, several that he suggests have been filmed, and his

The Movies on Trial. Compiled and edited by William J. Perlman. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

stories are all literary masterpieces, which rarely make the best films, especially in America. Judge Jonah J. Goldstein thinks that "children know more about gangsters and gunplay as a result of the motion picture than any child ought to know." The answer to that is, give them different lives and upbringing and they won't want to know. In any case, I feel they know just as much from yellow journalism, cheap thrillers and, if they are old enough, the plays from which many of the films are taken. One of the first steps in protecting children would be to clean up American advertising. So, feeling from this book that the movies are misunderstood and ill-treated, I turn to the Hays report, prepared to join in his pæan of praise.

The best in literature.

There is a slight shock in the first paragraph, when I read that American films "moved up the level of public appreciation to the point where the best in literature, in music and in drama is within the province of the universal entertainment service of motion pictures." For the first, I think of what *Becky Sharp* did to *Vanity Fair*, for the second of *The Fire Bird*, for the last of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In a country where it is not apparently thought odd that the star of *One Night of Love* should take rôles not usually essayed by the same singer (*Carmen* and *Madame Butterfly*), I realise that "the best in music" may well be taken to include *Naughty Marietta*. But when so much is made of *David Copperfield* as a peak progress-picture, I realise that it is high time someone pointed out how much is lost by filming (*i.e.*, setting in the third person) a book which owes much of its spirit to being written in the first. To cheer myself, I studied the list of films which Mr. Hays thinks so splendid. These include *Louis Pasteur*, *The Informer*, *Ruggles*, *Ah, Wilderness*. But *The Informer* was first filmed in England, *Ruggles* depended on Charles Laughton, "discovered" by England, and you can match *Ah, Wilderness* with *Turn of the Tide*. Though *Louis Pasteur* is notable, there is only one Muni to five Quins in *The Country Doctor*. *Rose Marie* and *Top Hat* find honourable mention, alongside *Les Misérables* and *Crime and Punishment*. O, Hollywood ! The Victor Hugo and the Dostoievsky were also filmed by European countries. The results were incontestably finer, which would suggest that when Hollywood and Europe do meet on equal ground, Europe does less damage to it.



THE LITTLEST REBEL

(Fox)



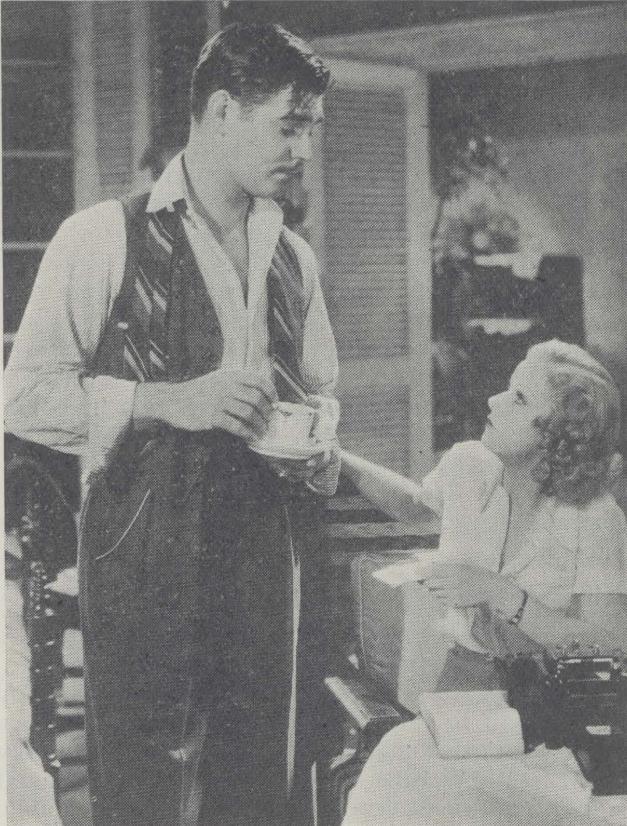
BECKY SHARP

(Radio)



THE MUSIC GOES ROUND

(Columbia)



WIFE VERSUS SECRETARY

(M.G.M.)

There is not a film in the Hays list which cannot be equalled, if not surpassed, by European production. Among European pictures, I have seen during the same period, I find Chopin's Farewell, Hey Rup ! Sanders, Die Ewige Maske, La Bandéra, Chapaev, Merlusse, Three Songs of Lenin. I might even include Tudor Rose and Passing of the Third Floor Back as films with respectable intentions . . . and I would then enquire of Mr. Hays why, if that is the best he can do, is he so jubilant ? His list, poor as it is, to represent the fourth industry of a great country, would look poorer if set against such films as Klondike Annie, Dante's Inferno and the hundred and one others, which he does not mention.

Education from Hollywood

Another class of which he says little is the educational. He pays lip-service to the word, but never once gets to grips with the subject. Some of the European films which have given me most pleasure have been L'Hippocampe, Douro, Chartres Cathedral, Terre d'Amour, the G.P.O. Coal Face and Night Mail, and the G-B. Instructional shorts, to mention a few. I know America makes educational films; so does Mr. Hays. But he appears to be too busy going into ecstasies over the thought of filming such examples of "the best in literature" as Ouida's Under Two Flags and Anthony Adverse to mention them. He is aware of colour cartoons—a little late, now that the Syndicated Symphonies are no longer what we meant when we spoke of Disney—and he rhapsodises over the future of fantasy, observing of colour-cartoons that "it is not difficult to foresee dramas spun from fantasy which, with kindly humour or satire, may come to have a large social and even educational significance (I like that "even") and which may draw audiences undreamed of by Aristophanes when he fashioned his comedies from the adventures of insects and birds." It is a pretty conceit, but figures prove nothing; Joan Crawford has already been seen by more people than ever saw Helen of Troy; and who, we may ask, would be more surprised than Mr. Hays to see on the screen The Birds or The Frogs, or such modern equivalents and extensions as our own Len Lye might do. How would Mr. Hays square this with his belief in avoiding "the prejudicial or the subversive"? He would say "by the processes of common sense." But his own are, I hope, most uncommon.

Selling product

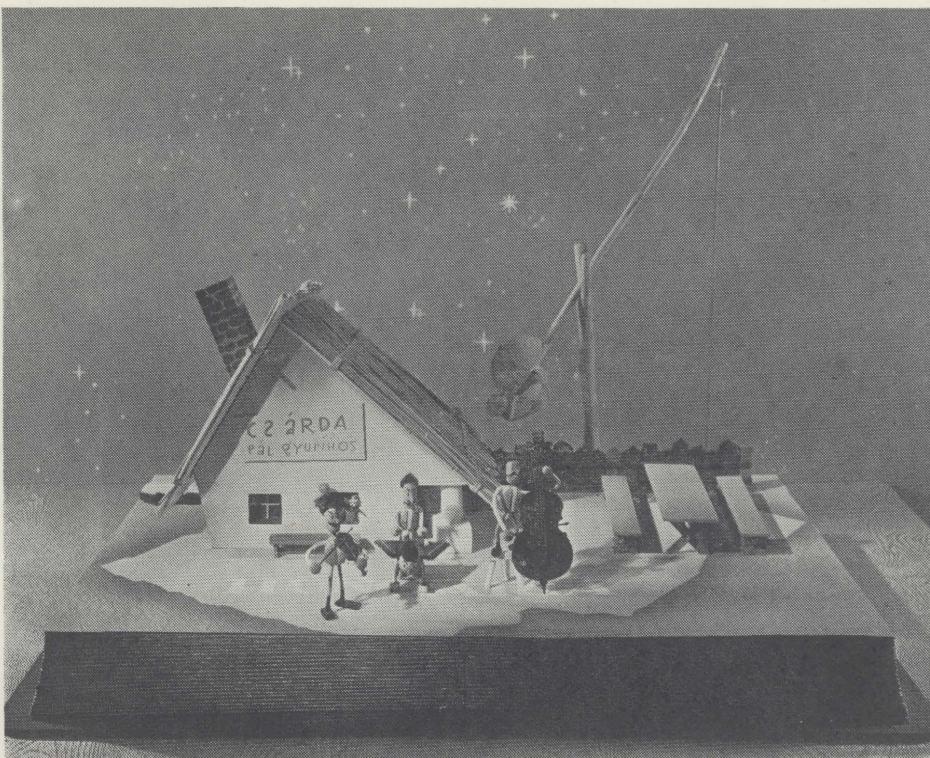
He excuses the crudity of cinema advertising by saying "the easy assumption that the merely suggestive, alluring, or captivating, in illustration or copy was enough to 'sell' a picture . . . could not be quickly exploded in the days when the public simply 'went to the pictures,' not to selected or considered motion picture entertainment." In short, the public are to blame ! We see how his mind works by the way he uses the fact that out of 12,450 advertise-

ments submitted in 1935, only 351 were rejected. He thinks that shows the material is of higher standard. We might maintain that such a low proportion implies that the standard of rejection is too low—and we have only to look at the advertisements to be sure. Most of them are written by people still in the nickelodeon stage. It is time that cinemas ceased to be defiled with such slogans as "An unkissed bride for six months—and then?"

Where is the improvement?

Regretfully, we must come to the conclusion that Mr. Hays' list runs strangely parallel to box-office and production costs. His pictures cost a lot, they brought in a lot; they are good. But even if Mr. Hays were right—he ought to be. We have been urging better pictures for years, and there is no reason to disbelieve in improvement. It is only natural that technique should advance. But have other things? Are the films Mr. Hays claps and chooses better than those of 1931, which gave us Cimarron, The Front Page, Tabu, City Lights, and (from Europe) Le Million, Die Dreigroschenoper, Congress Dances, Westfront, Enthusiasm? Or the year before, which had The Virginian, Hallelujah, All Quiet, Anna Christie, Abraham Lincoln, with Europe adding New Babylon, Turksib, Murder, The Blue Angel, Sous Les Toits, General Line, and Bottom of the World? Two years ago, we had Spitfire, It Happened One Night, Queen Christina, Of Human Bondage, the first Astaire. Europe gave Man of Aran, The Battle, Morganrot, The Will of Dr. Mabuse, Ces Messieurs de la Santé, Jew Suss, Le Dernier Milliardaire, Zéro de Conduite, The Scarlet Pimpernel.

Save in educational and documentary, the cinema has not improved upon these. It can't, while on the one hand we have complacency from the commercialists and on the other criticism, not so much of the cinema, as of the life which it is not alone in depicting. Ministers and others often forget that in attacking the cinema they are indirectly paying tribute to its vividness, since it—and it only—seems to make them aware of what is all round them. Much of the abuse in *The Movies on Trial* applies as well to other aspects of daily life as to films. There can be little chance of reforming these till the right values are expressed also by radio, papers and books. These in turn largely reflect an outlook formed by years of education in which the sentimental, the superficial, the acquisitive, survive. Till this is altered, America's "universal entertainment service" can hardly change. As an educational force, it could show what is real, could discourage evasion of issue and false ideas of personal, as opposed to collective, happiness. But this would be "subversive," and as Mr. Hays does not appear to be sufficiently interested in educational pictures to mention any one of them by name, his advice to the producers should have been, not Bigger and Better pictures, but Fewer Frightful ones.



From **THE MAGIC ATLAS**
by George Pal

GEORGE PAL

By Marie Seton

In this country there is still a lingering prejudice against advertisement films; audiences are slightly resentful when they are told they must buy such and such a commodity. Were it not for this conviction that art and entertainment seldom go amicably hand in hand with commercial propaganda, the cartoon and doll films of the young Hungarian, George Pal, would be far better known in England than they are.

Thanks largely to the Dutch firm, Phillips Radio, Pal is making a steady contribution to the cinema. He works at Eindhoven, Holland, where Phillips have given him a studio, and allow him free rein to further the ideas he began developing a few years ago in Berlin where he was an art designer for Ufa. His first important film, *Midnight*, was made in 1932 for a Berlin cigarette firm. It was black and white, and in it Pal animated an army of little puppets made in the form of cigarettes. Since then his dolls and the materials he utilizes have become extremely varied. Of his drawn cartoon films, *The Revolution of the Bulb* is the most amusing: it seems, however, that the puppet film is becoming his real metier.

Pal's dolls are of brightly painted wood, and have the appearance of toys; and as in cartoon where each stage of a movement has to be drawn, so in Pal's films there has to be a number of figures in slightly different positions to develop a single movement. The series of dolls completing such a movement as walking, dancing, or jumping are attached to wooden boards; while the figures

which have to give the impression of moving through the air are made in profile and fixed to sheets of glass. The puppets are then arranged in a miniature set built of pasteboard and wood.

Pal's style of work is fantastic and delicate, and he relies upon individual characters far more than armies of animated objects and crowds of dolls. His humour is subtle. Of his advertisement pictures, *Ship of the Ether* and *The Magic Atlas* are the most imaginative. *Ship of the Ether* is an enchanting fantasy of a broadcasting studio in which the doll artistes go through dreamlike antics and ships in twisted glass sail over fantastic seas. *Magic Atlas* presents a variety programme from important radio stations, showing what you can enjoy if you have a Phillips set. The dolls in this film, as well as some in *Ship of the Ether*, are often amusing caricatures of such celebrities as Strauss, Henry Hall, and Tauber; there is also a delicious tennis tournament broadcast from Paris.

Recently George Pal has been making a series of independent films with English dialogue, based on stories from the Arabian Nights; the first, *Ali Baba*, is complete. Because it does not have to conform to advertisement, *Ali Baba* is Pal's best film. It is a delightfully whimsical version of the old story, and the use of colour (Gasparcolour is used) and the composition of the whole are excellent. He has also just completed a puppet film in England for Horlick's Malted Milk which is so good that two more may be sponsored by the same firm immediately.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART FILM LIBRARY

By Iris Barry

THE art of the motion picture is the only great art peculiar to the twentieth century. Its influence in forming the taste and affecting the attitude to life of the public is well-known, but little has been done to provoke a critical or selective attitude towards the film in that part of the community readily responsive to the arts, and nothing has been done to make possible a consistent study of its content, style, history or development.

There exists a widespread demand for the means and material for studying the motion picture as art, yet the bulk of films, both domestic and foreign, which are of importance historically or aesthetically, have been invisible under existing circumstances, and in serious danger of being permanently lost or destroyed by the action of time.

In the report which the Museum of Modern Art in New York submitted to the Rockefeller Foundation in April 1935, these were two of the principal arguments put forward to urge the need for a film library in America. The purpose of such a library was stated to be: to trace, catalogue, assemble, exhibit, and circulate to museums and colleges single films or programmes of films in exactly the same manner in which the Museum traces, catalogues, exhibits, and circulates paintings, sculpture, architectural photographs and models or reproductions of works of art, so that the film may be studied and enjoyed as any other of the arts is studied and enjoyed.

At the time the Museum was founded in 1929, the Director in his preliminary report to the Trustees had already envisaged for the future a department of motion pictures. It was not until February, 1935, however, that any concrete action came about. Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mr. John Hay Whitney, and Mr. Edward M. M. Warburg, who had interested themselves in the scheme, discussed plans for an active department of motion pictures with the Director, and decided on the preparation of a detailed report. This was drawn up by Mr. John Abbott in collaboration with myself.

Film trade co-operation

In preparing the report, it was fully realised that the goodwill and assistance of the film industry as a whole would be essential to the carrying out of the Museum's plans, since most of the films desirable for its collection were owned by the several members of the industry, and were only to be secured as gifts, permanent loans or rights-to-exhibit. On the technical side, the Museum was much in need of expert advice upon the complex problem of tracing old films, of restoring films that have perished chemically, of preserving them for the

future, and of estimating the cost of amassing and circulating its proposed collection. From the outset, therefore, the industry's assistance was sought and was generously forthcoming.

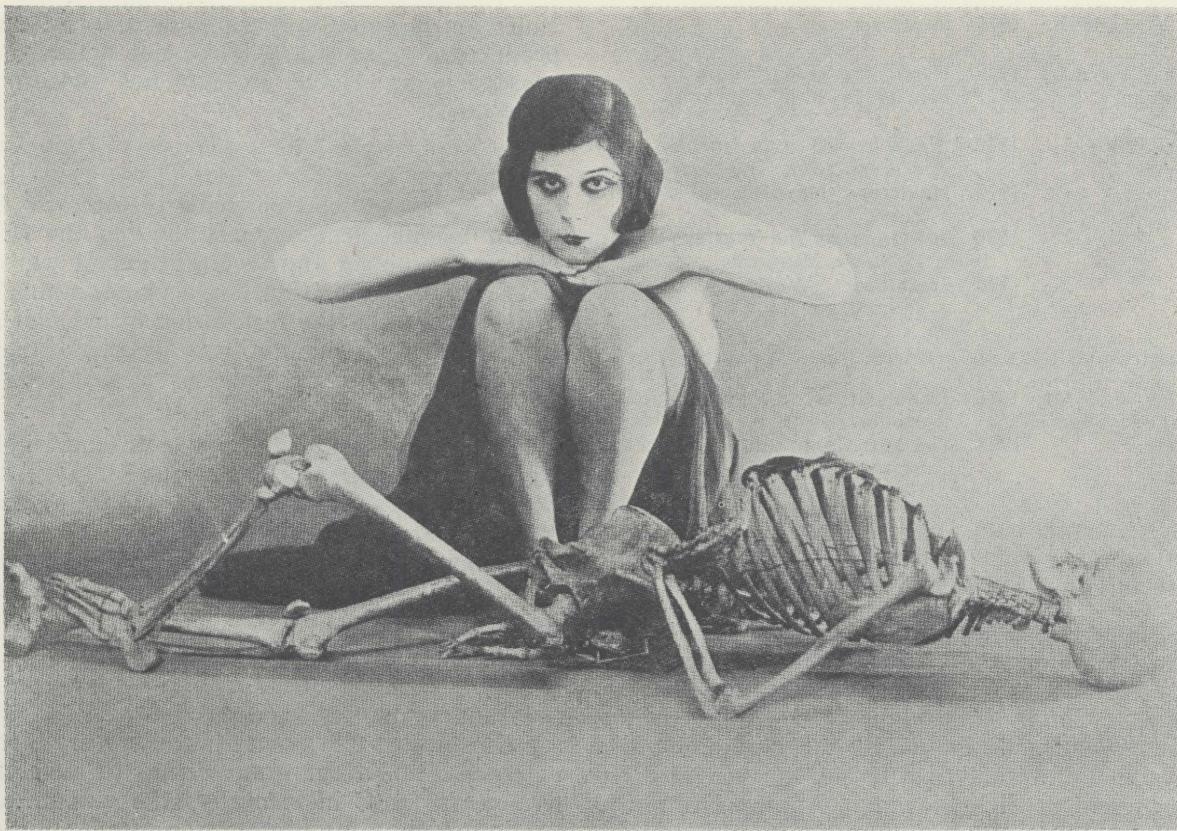
In May 1935, the report having been submitted to the Rockefeller Foundation, the President and Trustees of the Museum were informed that a conditional grant to enable the plan outlined in the report to be carried out had been approved by the Trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation. Private subscriptions, necessary to secure the grant, were generously provided by three anonymous donors.

After this, my husband and I went to Hollywood, where we succeeded in interesting the executive heads of the various firms in the work of the Library and in securing assurances of their support.

The first two programmes

With films received from these and other sources it has been possible to compile two preliminary programmes of films for the study of the historical and aesthetic development of the cinema. These have been available for circulation to colleges and museums since January 1st, 1936. What to me, at least, seems peculiarly satisfactory is that, as a result, an increasing number of American universities and colleges, as well as adult education groups in many cities, are thus enabled to undertake for the first time a serious and critical study of this new omnipotent medium. In some institutions, the series of films are given as an extra-curriculum activity; in others, as a regular academic course; in certain cases under the auspices of a Fine Arts Department, in others by the Department of Drama. The first series of five programmes of approximately two-hour duration each, entitled *A Short Survey of the Film in America, 1894-1932* is made up as follows:—

1. The Develop- ment of Narrative.	c1895	Wash Day Troubles.
	c1895	The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots.
	1902	A Trip to the Moon, by George Méliès.
	1903	The Great Train Robbery, by Edwin S. Porter.
	1907	Faust, a Pathé film.
	1911	Queen Elizabeth, with Sarah Bernhardt.
2. The Rise of the Ameri- can Film.	1912	The New York Hat, by D. W. Griffith, with Mary Pickford and Lionel Barrymore.
	1914	The Fugitive, by Thomas H. Ince, with Wm. S. Hart.
	1915	The Clever Dummy, a Mack Sennett comedy.
	1914	A Fool There Was, by Frank Powell, with Theda Bara.



Publicity portrait of THEDA BARA used by Fox in 1916 or 1917. (These illustrations are reproduced from *A History of the Movies*, published by Covici Friede in 1931)



Al Jolson and May McAvoy in THE JAZZ SINGER, the first full-length talkie, directed by Alan Crosland, produced by Warner Brothers in 1927

3. D. W. Griffith. 1916 *Intolerance*.
 4. The German Influence. 1928 *Hands*, by Stella Simon.
 1927 *Sunrise*, by F. W. Murnau.
 5. The Talkies. 1926-7 Early sound experiments, with a scene from *The Jazz Singer*.
 1927 *Movietone Newsreel of Bernard Shaw*.
 1930 *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Lewis Milestone.
 1928 *Steamboat Willie*, by Walt Disney.

For institutions not equipped with sound apparatus :—

5a. The End of the Silent Era. 1928 *Plane Crazy*, the first Mickey Mouse.
 1928 *The Last Command*, by Josef von Sternberg.

The general title of the second programme, organised on similar lines, is *Some Memorable American Films, 1896-1934*.

Both series are available on either 16 mm. or 35 mm. non-flam to colleges and museums at a charge of \$125 (about £30) for each group of five showings. Single showings may be obtained at a charge of \$40 each (about £10). Programme notes of a critical and analytical nature are provided for those present at each showing. Appropriate music is also provided to accompany the silent films.

By the autumn of this year, two further programmes will be available, and these will concern themselves largely with the European film. The development of the advance guard film, of the documentary film, and of the animated cartoon will be illustrated by significant examples, while special attention will be given to those films which have conspicuously affected the fashions, the speech, or the behaviour of the large public. Of such are *A Fool There Was* with Theda Bara, which in 1914 introduced a new word, "vamp," to the English language; and the Irene and Vernon Castle film *The Whirl of Life*, also made in 1914, which was in considerable measure responsible for the popularity of bobbed hair, jazz bands, and the dancing craze.

Organisation

The general work of a film library and the necessity for one is already well understood in Britain, where the National Film Library was set up to do much the same kind of work as we are doing in America. I gather that practical details of our Library are likely to be of more interest.

We have come to an arrangement with all the American producing companies whereby we may apply to them for prints of any films we require. These prints are supplied at cost prices and the main conditions to be observed are that the films are loaned only to *bona fide* educational institutions or film societies and that no charge is made for admission to performances. From this it will be seen that the number of films in the Library's

collection is potentially equivalent to all the films produced in America. Those not actually in our possession we have so far not attempted to catalogue.

The staff of the Library consists of my husband as Director, myself as Curator, two secretaries, a young assistant who particularly interests himself in the arrangement of music and in the stills, an electrical engineer and technical expert who is also in charge of the distribution, a photographic expert who assists us in the restoration of old film and in the reproduction of our stills, a messenger, telephone operator and the part-time services of a publicity assistant.

The Trustee Committee of the Museum of Modern Art is assisted in its work by a Film Library Advisory Committee, consisting of Mr. Will Hays (Chairman), Mr. Jules Brutatour, Mr. David Stevens, Head of the Department of Humanities of the Rockefeller Foundation, Mr. Stanton Griffis, a Director of Paramount and Trustee of Cornell University, Dr. Irwin Panofsky and Mr. Irving Thalberg.

Since January 1st of this year, our film programmes have been loaned to 72 colleges and societies and the popularity of the Library is steadily growing. When our grant comes to an end after five years (and, incidentally, the amount of the grant, which has been inaccurately quoted as 100,000 dollars, is actually considerably more) we are hoping that the receipts from the hire of the programmes will be sufficient to cover our working costs, even if the grant is not renewed.

In search of material

At the time of writing my husband and I are just setting out on a tour of the principal European film-producing centres and hope thus to acquire representative films of all countries for our future years' work. The vital contributions of England and of France, and even of Italy, before the war; the great creative post-war German period, followed by the new tendencies from the U.S.S.R., must all find appropriate representation in the comprehensive, chronologically-arranged collection of films which we hope to have amassed by 1940. It will be the first time in history that any such first-hand record of the birth of a new art will have been undertaken: we ourselves in the Film Library are merely the first students in this field. And, most encouraging and most helpful, our researches are really proving successful largely because—far from being solitary workers—we represent only the American wing of a spontaneous and universal movement to preserve a record of the birth and development of the art of the cinema. An interchange both of information and of material between the various film archives—in Berlin, in Moscow, in Paris, in Stockholm, as well as in London and in New York—is what we must all very ardently desire.

LONGER FEATURE FILMS

SEVENTY-FIVE to ninety minutes used to be regarded as the right length for a feature film. The type of programme which has become most popular and, we are told, is demanded by the public in this country is a programme consisting of two feature films supported by a newsreel, and sometimes by a cartoon or occasionally a "short." A complete programme is not supposed to last more than $3\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

What will be the effect on cinema programmes of the longer feature films? We have seen *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (150 mins.), *Mutiny on the Bounty* (133 mins.), *David Copperfield* (130 mins.), *A Tale of Two Cities* (123 mins.), *The Crusades* (115 mins.), *The Magnificent Obsession* (110 mins.), *Things to Come* (108 mins.), *Show Boat* (115 mins.); we are to see, within the next few months, *The Great Ziegfeld* (180 mins.), *Anthony Adverse* (140 mins.), *Romeo and Juliet* (150 mins.), *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (115 mins.), and perhaps *The Green Pastures* (135 mins.); and we are informed there are more to come of a similar length.

Hacking to measure

With most of these films it will be almost impossible to present any supporting feature film without extending the total length of the programme beyond $3\frac{1}{4}$ hours. Impossible, that is, unless on general release they are cut by the distributors or by individual exhibitors. It seems hard that, because distributors so decide, cinema patrons outside the West End of London should not be allowed to see films as the producers made them. It is preposterous that individual exhibitors should hack hundreds of feet out of a film in order to make room for another feature film. Apart from the damage which may be done to the film as a whole, such action would obviously make it impossible for an audience to judge for itself the merits of the single feature programme supported by shorts.

The Association of Cine-Technicians included in their evidence before the Board of Trade Departmental Committee instances of film cutting by exhibitors, amounting in one instance to the excision of one complete reel and in another to the complete disappearance from the film of a character who appeared among the credit titles. Numerous confirmations of this practice appeared in the cinema trade press; one manager was reported to have cut out 2,000 feet from a film of 6,000 feet. Such action by exhibitors constitutes a breach of their contract with the distributors, but a number of distributors are prepared, on request, to cut films in order to help exhibitors to make up their programmes. To the cinemagoer who does not see scenes which his friend saw at another cinema, or

to the director whose film may be spoiled by faulty continuity it is of no consequence whether the film was cut by a "competent" distributor or an "incompetent" exhibitor.

Are the distributors who may adopt this solution, and the exhibitors who have already adopted it, certain that they are giving their patrons what they want? Would Walthamstow really prefer to see two-thirds only of, shall we say, *Romeo and Juliet* in order that it may also see for its shilling a second feature film in the same programme? The quality of many second feature films makes one doubt it.

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn is reported from America as having said: "If the public will sit through two bad pictures that consume three hours of time, there is no reason why it shouldn't sit through one good picture that will run that length. The same holds true of enduring one bad picture in order to view a good one. And the sooner producers start fighting fire with fire, by releasing pictures that are so long and at the same time so good that they can't be teamed with another picture, the better it will be for the entire film industry and the theatres themselves. Hereafter, I, for one, intend to disregard what is called normal length and, in so far as is possible, produce pictures that will stand on their own feet independently of any other feature attraction on the programme."

Opportunity for shorts

There are certainly many cinema patrons—although they may be in a minority—who still prefer the single feature programme and who would welcome the opportunity afforded to exhibitors by these longer feature films to return to the single feature programme. The public, in general, has been trained to like the two-feature programme.

Could not exhibitors now turn their skill to popularising the single-feature programme supported by shorts? This country has produced better non-fictional shorts than any country in the world, and could easily supply a demand for first-class entertaining shorts. The wide popularity some years ago of the *Secrets of Nature* shorts before the two-feature programme became established, and the current success of films like *Night Mail*, suggest that many audiences would welcome a return of the non-fictional short; not to mention good two-reeler comedies, which have also disappeared.

It is difficult to believe that a public which only demands one play an evening at the theatre and which, according to the booksellers and libraries, reads two non-fictional books for every novel, really does demand two feature films in a programme—especially when one of them is almost invariably third-rate stuff.

LIVING HISTORY

By H. L. Beales and R. S. Lambert

MEDIAEVAL VILLAGE is an experimental film which we believe opens up a new range of possibilities in historical films and in the use of films in history teaching. The basis of the film is the use of historical survivals and documents as they exist to-day instead of the reconstruction of historical places and the costume dramatisation of historical events and characters. All over England are to be found survivals and reminders of customs and ceremonies which were once significant and vital to the life of the people and which, in some instances, still condition it. Reconstructed and dramatic historical films, like historical pageants, always shed round the characters and events portrayed an atmosphere of unreality. It is almost impossible to reconstruct an historical building which does not look like a modern reconstruction and even with careful casting and skilful acting it is difficult for modern men and women to convey a convincing impression of the characters they represent. If, as often happens, an actor is chosen to play an historical character or, for example, an 18th century squire, not because he suits the part but because of his value at the box-office as a star, or if historical settings are reconstructed so as to meet the technical demands of the camera-man or the scenarist, the resulting picture of the period is inevitably falsified no matter how scrupulously the director and the actors study the characters and the period as they are revealed by reliable histories or surviving documents.

Laxton yesterday and to-day

In Mediaeval Village there is depicted the communal, open-field system of the Middle Ages as it survives and is worked to-day at Laxton. Nothing has been introduced into the film that is not included in the first map of Laxton, made in 1630; the only reconstructions are models of Laxton Castle and the Manor House which are shown in the introduction to the main part of the film. No characters appear dressed in the costumes of the period. The men and women of Laxton to-day, the descendants of the men and women of Laxton throughout the centuries, are shown in the clothes of to-day working on the same fields under the same system as their predecessors.

Laxton lies between Scrooby and Gainsborough, the homes of the Pilgrim Fathers, and Sherwood Forest. A peculiar combination of economic circumstances, including its isolated situation, a soil peculiarly suitable for wheat growing and a philanthropic absentee Lord of the Manor, have enabled Laxton to survive as a unique record of an important phase in our national history and of a way of life

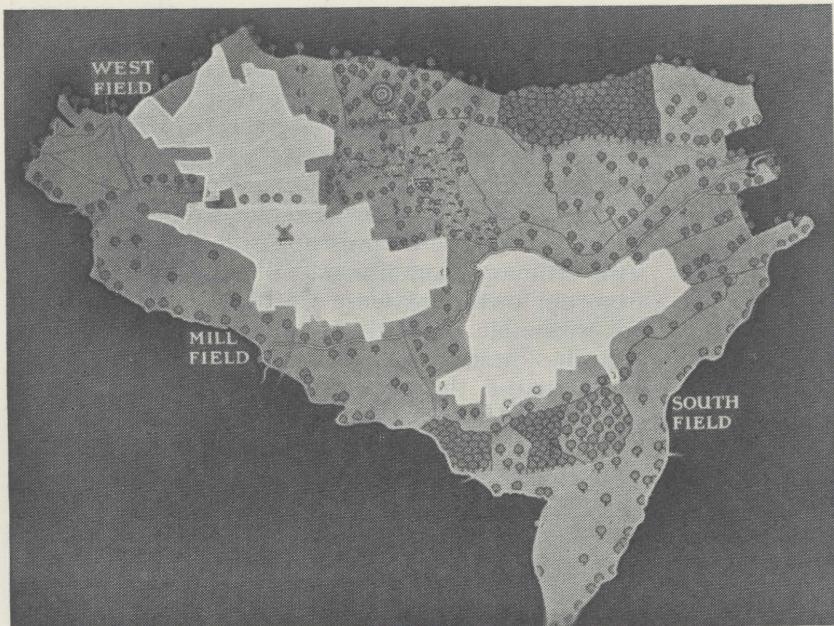
belonging to the past which may at any time disappear. Whatever value the film may or may not have as an aid to teaching history—and we believe it has considerable value—it will therefore have a unique value as an historical record.

There are one or two—but only one or two—other villages where substantial portions of the communal field system survive and there are other places with odd relics of the mediaeval village system. When we first suggested to G.B. Instructional that they should produce a film of a mediaeval village much discussion took place between ourselves and Miss Mary Field and Mr. Bruce Woolfe as to whether a film should not be made presenting a more or less complete picture by supplementing the material surviving at Laxton with material from other villages and in other parts of the country. For example, the communal meadow which was an essential part of the mediaeval manor and which is marked on the old map of Laxton has disappeared. We soon decided, however, that it was wiser to make a film of the mediaeval village system as it exists in one place—Laxton, and to draw attention to the features of the system which no longer exist there. The film is, therefore, a documentary record of Laxton and life there to-day, related to and compared with Laxton as it was, but not a complete historical picture either of Laxton as it was, or of the mediaeval village system.

The Open-field system

Thus the film shows by means of the map of 1630 and the modern map of Laxton that while the three open fields round the village, the Mill Field, the South Field, and the West Field, still survive they are smaller than they were originally. But the holdings are still divided into strips as they always have been, and the fields are still worked in rotation—Wheat, Spring Corn (oats, clover, peas, beans and other spring crops) and Fallow. The village church has greatly changed in appearance and the manor house has disappeared but the houses are laid out on almost exactly the same plan as they were in 1630 and each house still has farm buildings round it, with an orchard and a small holding. Each householder is still a small farmer, a tenant of the Lord of the Manor, and each farm still carries with it a holding consisting of a number of strips in each field. And the farmers still use the two-handed broadcast for sowing which they are shown using in the map of 1630.

But the most interesting survival of all is the Manorial Court or Court Leet. It is a meeting of the tenants held once a year and presided over by the



MEDIAEVAL VILLAGE

directed by J. B. Holmes
(G.-B. Instructional)

Map showing present size of fields as compared with original size. The village is situated to the North-East of the Mill Field

The " Syke " at the edge of the Mill Field



The Jury pegging out a boundary

Steward of the Lord of the Manor. The Court is a "Court Leet of Our Sovereign Lord the King" and as such its findings have legal authority. Were it not for this the Court would have lapsed long ago and probably the open field system would have disappeared with it. At this Court the "Homage," or Jury, for each open field is appointed and the film shows a Jury of to-day making its rounds as they have made them each year for centuries soon after the sowing. The Jury peg out the boundary marks so that they can see that no one ploughs on to the "sykes" and roads, and impose fines for any encroachment. Even if a man's plough has gone only a foot too far that is an encroachment, and not to check it would result ultimately in the disappearance of a "syke" and with it the proceeds from the grass on it, which is sold by auction among the villagers for the upkeep of the "sykes," roads and "gaits" for which the Lord of the Manor is responsible. These and a number of other surviving customs are shown, not as something quaint or picturesque, but as a vital part of the life of Laxton to-day.

Using the film

The film has been made with a view to its being shown in ordinary cinema houses and we can imagine that it will prove interesting not only in this country but also in America, or, for example, in Canada where farming has been developed and carried on along lines as different from the open field system as can be imagined.

But our additional interest in the film is in its value for educational purposes. It could be used by

teachers for classroom lessons on the manorial system or as illustrative supplementary material to any of the standard approaches to mediaeval or economic history. We believe that the system will be more vivid and real to any class of student after seeing this film and we were told by one of the leading lecturers on the subject at London University that to be able to show the film would save three parts of the time at present spent in explaining it with ordinary diagrams and illustrations. Finally, from our own experience we believe that it would be invaluable to adult education organisations in arousing interest in economic and social history. We visualise the time when the autumn session of a University extra-mural class or a W.E.A. class will open with films of this kind to enlist students and arouse interest. That the film does arouse interest of a kind that can be extremely valuable to a lecturer taking a course of lectures on economics and social history has been proved to us by two meetings of specialists and students to whom the film has been shown. On both occasions questions at once followed on why and how the system has survived and how it compares, in character and utility, with other farming systems.

We believe that by means of historical films of this type the film can make a valuable contribution to the appreciation of history. The history of the past lives because the film presents a past that is still alive.

NOTE: A copy of *Mediaeval Village* has been presented by G.-B. Instructional Ltd. to the National Film Library for permanent preservation as an historical document.

POLITICS ON THE SCREEN

Lord TYRRELL, who was appointed President of the British Board of Film Censors in November, 1935, in his paper delivered at the annual conference of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association on June 17th, drew attention to "the creeping of politics into films." "From my past experience I consider this dangerous," he stated.

"Nothing would be more calculated to arouse the passions of the British public than the introduction, on the screen, of subjects dealing either with religious or political controversy. I believe you are all alive to this danger. You cannot lose sight of one of the first regulations in your licences, which states that no film must be exhibited which is likely to lead to disorder.

"So far, we have had no film dealing with current burning political questions, but the thin end of the wedge is being inserted, and it is difficult to foresee to what lengths it may go, or where it may ultimately lead, unless some check is kept on these early developments.

"The Board has been attacked for having passed certain innocuous dramatic films, which irrational partisans have looked upon as containing insidious propaganda against the State. This is an attitude of mind with which we can neither agree nor sympathise. Indeed, Mickey Mouse has been so assailed on more than one occasion Consequently, I think it would be well, in this early stage, to have some definite pronouncements from your organisation as to what will be your attitude towards these films, if, and when, they make their appearance."

Referring to *People of Britain* Lord Tyrrell stated that there was no question of the Board's banning it and that "as a matter of fact, the certificate was issued for the film the day before the attacks were made in the Press." Explaining the cuts recently made in the *March of Time*, Lord Tyrrell stated that *The Times* had said that the amendments suggested by the Board had improved the film and that the distributors had asserted that

they did not in any way militate against its interest. Referring to the attacks on the Board in the Press in regard to these films he stated that as they were quite unfounded "we did not think it necessary to give any public explanation." Lord Tyrrell made no reference to the alleged political propaganda in news reels. News reels are exempt from censorship as being records of current events.

The Peace Film

People of Britain, or, as it was better known, the Peace Film, was made by Freenat Films. This company in November, 1934, produced **Thunder in the Air**, a three-reel film attacking the armaments racket, which was distributed by Butcher's. **People of Britain** is a three-minute film stating the facts of re-armament, the universal desire among ordinary men and women for peace, and urging everyone to write to his or her M.P., demanding peace by collective security. It was offered free to cinema exhibitors by Dofil, Ltd.

On 27th March the film was submitted to the British Board of Film Censors by Freenat Films. On 3rd April, the producers were formally notified that "exception has been taken by the examiners." Verbally, it was learnt that the film was regarded as controversial and that the Board was unable to issue a certificate until it had consulted the War Office about certain material in the film which was thought to be the property of the War Office. The producers informed the Board that the material referred to was obtained from commercial sources and had been used in previous films which had been passed by the Board. At the same time, surprise was expressed that the Board should concern itself with the source and copyright of film material.

On 7th April, the film was shown to the Press. On 8th April, news articles and editorials on the action of the Board appeared in, among other papers, the *Manchester Guardian*, *Daily Herald*, *News Chronicle* and *Daily Telegraph*. On 8th April, the film was privately shown to a number of M.P.'s drawn from all parties and to members of the T.U.C. General Council. On the afternoon of 8th April, the producers were informed by telephone that a "Universal" certificate had been issued to the film and the film went into the programme of a number of West-End and London cinemas. A Press communiqué issued by the Board and published on April 9th, included the statement that

"The film was viewed, at our request, by the appropriate authorities, who came to the conclusion that the military sections were not Crown property. The publishers knew that the certificate would be granted immediately confirmation had been received from the authorities concerned. And it is now awaiting them."

The League of Nations Union circularised all its branches, urging them to request local cinema exhibitors to show the film. At Bristol the local branch of the C.E.A. advised its members against showing the film because it was controversial. In reply to protests from the Bishop of Bristol, and the local League of Nations Union, Co-operative

Society, and Trades Council, the Chairman of the local C.E.A. at a subsequent meeting, emphasised that the decision was not against the Peace Film as such but against propaganda and free films, and against controversial films. A member asked why then the members of the C.E.A. should have been recommended to show various other propaganda films, such as **Death on the Road** and **The Great Crusade**, and pointed to the propaganda and controversial material often contained in news reels.

The Peace Film was included in the programme at 570 cinemas in Great Britain, including four in Bristol, and was shown to 4,300,000 people.

News Reels

On 2nd April, Gaumont-British News and British Paramount News released issues containing a recruiting appeal by Mr. Duff Cooper, the Secretary for War. Mr. Duff Cooper's appeal was presented accompanied by scenes of army life which were not current events.

At the May meeting of the General Council of the C.E.A., consideration was given to allegations made by the Manchester C.E.A. and Odeon Theatres, Ltd., that propaganda was appearing in news reels. The General Secretary stated that it was always open to individual exhibitors to omit such sequences in those areas where they were likely to cause annoyance to patrons. It was stated by a prominent exhibitor that he had found it necessary to form an editorial board to go through news reels and that a fortnight seldom passed without cuts having to be made. On the suggestion of the President, it was agreed to draw the attention of the news reel companies once again to the desirability of omitting any items which savoured of propaganda.

March of Time No. 8

The April issue of the **March of Time** contained a sequence dealing with the Abyssinian War and the League of Nations' efforts and failure to end it. Cuts were demanded by the British Board of Film Censors before the film was passed. These cuts, it was contended by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, were unnecessary since they were facts published in the newspapers and known to everyone; the sequences, when cut, resulted in a travesty of the events being considered and of the work of the League of Nations. "It seems to me perfectly ridiculous," Lord Cecil added; "The ways of the censor are indeed inscrutable." The scenes cut were Mr. Ramsay MacDonald talking with Mussolini at Stresa, troopships carrying British troops to Egypt, shots of newspaper posters announcing the dispatch of the troops, Mr. Baldwin arriving for a Cabinet meeting after the result of the Peace Ballot. Commentary cut included references to the suggestions made that the Suez Canal should be closed and that stronger economic sanctions were at one time contemplated.

Spencer Tracy in *FURY*, directed by Fritz Lang

(M.G.M.)

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

By Alistair Cooke

THE summer term is now definitely over and most professional film critics will feel that movie-going in the next few months is what Groucho would call Midsummer Madness. But Mr. Rowson's brave figures reveal a stolid million or two who refuse to be cloyed. Herewith, then, for the less celluloid-soddened, a conscientious end-of-term report.

Best Film of the Quarter: *Fury*. Most Over-rated: *The Trail of The Lonesome Pine*. Most Under-rated: *King of Burlesque*. Worst Film of the Quarter: Tie between *The Marriage of Corbal* and *Wife v. Secretary*, who will hold the cup jointly until probably the end of the year.

It is not too cynical to say that most film critics have a pretty good idea not what, but *how*, they are going to write before they enter the theatre. The titlers and publicity men fool us all, including themselves, and if a film is called *The Passionate Lady* and is heralded by a blare of ringing adjectives, though it may be the finest film ever made, the "intelligent" critics will skip the whole matter

and gratefully fall back on a stock response as old as their boyhood. The old famous "schoolmaster's attitude" to the movies is slumbering securely away in the preconscious of most of us and is readily invoked and set complacently sneering by the first stills, the first newspaper advertisement, the splash across billboards of any inept title. The poor wretched movies have a long way to go, even with their addicts, before they'll be allowed to be respectable or even sentient. What an enviable position the novel is in. *Of Human Bondage* or *Vile Bodies* may not seem very mental titles to you, but once you are acquainted with the signatures of the gentlemen who wrote them, the first title begins to sound more like the Brothers Karamazov than the Brothers Warner, and the early Vitaphone smell of the second begins to strike the delicate nostril as the very pungency of great satire. But all the elaborate armoury of this snobbery buckles in a second before the onslaught of an opponent whose name is unknown in your country. This is the trickiest and truest test. If we are told that

E. M. Delafield is writing the dialogue of a new film, we listen with more care, while America yawns. Most of the virtuoso judgment of American films in our country is that of smart-alecks who are pretty safe in attending to any opus by Lubitsch, Capra, John Ford, but who, when the snob introduction is missing, have no eye for verisimilitude, no ear for authentic dialogue. So William Wyler is praised for a film which depends on the unknown Lillian Hellman; the Marx Bros. (though God Bless thee, Bully Groucho!) get the whole credit for lines and a philosophy that are the stock-in-trade of two dialect writers of genius, George Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind. For this sad misdirection of credit, there seems to be no solution. For the title-snobbery, I suggest that Aldous Huxley should be signed by the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences to rewrite all titles. Then *Broadway Bill* would have been changed for British audiences not to *Strictly Confidential* but to *Do Bravely, Horse*; *Dangerous* would be rechristened *Luxury, Pell-Mell*; *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* would appear as *Vile Abominable Tents*; and *Thirteen Hours by Air* will be recalled as the classic *The Winds Grow Grace*. The movies will have grown cultured, even if they are still bad.

All this, as you may not have gathered, is a generalised lament for *King of Burlesque*, one of

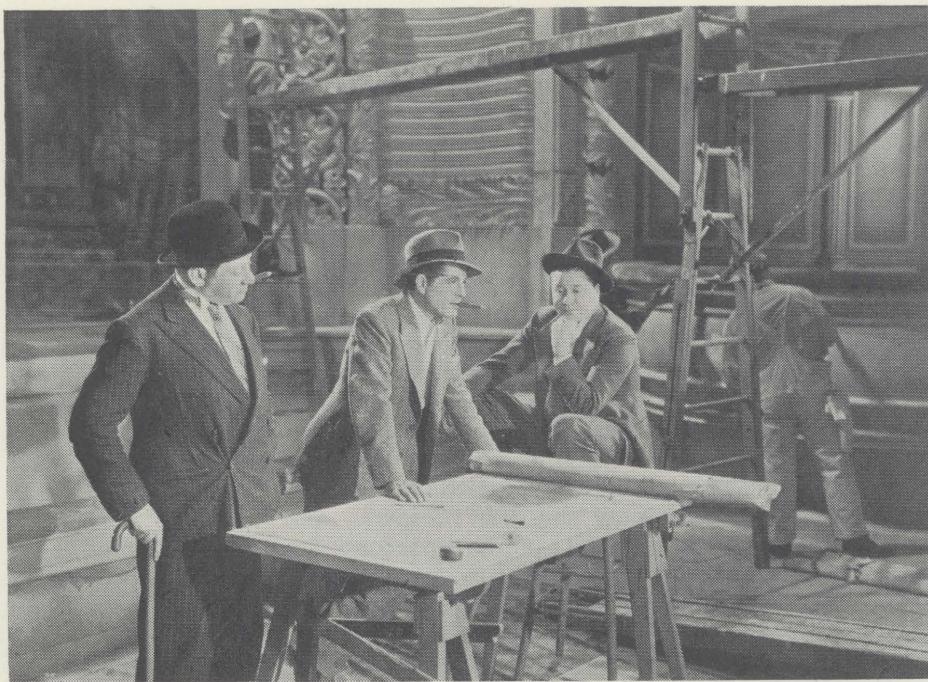
the most honest, accurate, daffy, sheerly good-natured movies that you could ever hope to see. The title had most of the English critics nonchalantly vague or squirming on the mat. Some thought to be a king of burlesque was a theatrical ambition not an unmentionable shame, and Mr. Sidney Carroll didn't seem to know whether Warner Baxter was coming or going. It was enough that here was another "Broadway musical" and the youngest member of a local film society knows by this time that a musical is never art. So at that stolid, knowing press show, a good many honest talents passed unnoted and unsung: Warner Baxter's curiously energetic sincerity, a beautiful uncondescending study of a naive, generous manager of a burlesque house; an acid etching by the best character comedian on the screen (Jackie Oakie in case you didn't know); and the humorous, rancid dialect of *Forty-second Street* written by Gene Fowler as straight as O'Hara writes another sort, straighter than Hemingway writes any. Gene Fowler is possibly the most distinguished of those U.S. writers doomed to the uncomplaining obscurity of a Hollywood retaining fee. After Robert Riskin, there is no screen writer who knows his types cleaner or can put them more smoothly on the sound track.

The Trail of the Lonesome Pine came on us like a seaside holiday, lots of lobster-like sun tan



Will Rogers and Irvin Cobb in *STEAMBOAT ROUND THE BEND*, directed by John Ford

(Fox)



Warner Baxter and Jack Oakie in *KING OF BURLESQUE*, directed by Sidney Lafield (Fox)

and a spate of highly-coloured postcards. It was cunningly presented, the distributing company giving the clever impression that the thing was like the Coronation and overwhelming to handle, but as far as I'm concerned it's far below the monochromes of the quarter. Sylvia Sidney may be feeling awfully well these days, but she's no more than in the pink of condition. I've seen her in Hyde Park and I know. And I couldn't wish Fred Stone anything less than an infinite life. But he's sixty-five and even the San Bernardino mountains posing as the Appalachians can't tone a man up like that. In spite of the spectrum, it was just another hill-billy and deadly dull.

There was one film which, compared with the quarter's best, was much too near the stage. But since the stage play was *The Children's Hour*, practically any movie adaptation was bound to keep the adult pity and astringency of the original. Lillian Hellman, who wrote the play and was sensibly lifted to Hollywood for the adaptation, gave to the appalling *The Dark Angel* its four minutes of life, a fragment of children's dialogue which reminded you of the refinements of

half-calculated cruelty that toddlers use for humour. In *These Three*, this reminder was expanded into a whole movie and deepened into a genuine tragedy. Of course, since the original pathos was based on a charge of Lesbianism, Hollywood saw to it that Joel McCrea was introduced as a go-between, so that none of us 200,000,000 little ones should suffer pain or shock. This fatuous concession (McCrea's all right, but I mean the gesture of including him) made him look

like a bishop) dissipated the tension between the two girls which was the chief dramatic element of the play. But for all that, *These Three* kept its dialogue and gained a terrified, brilliant performance by Bonita Granville. And William Wyler's direction used the distance between us and the characters for the most effective and bloodless Aristotelian purposes, tracking the camera relentlessly up to their faces when we would rather have escaped from the problem, scuttling pitifully away from them when we ached to give them a warm embrace.

The *Ex-Mrs. Bradford* made technical history by making a carbon copy clearer and surer than the original. Since *The Thin Man* they've been pegging away at that line of suave toughness until



Bonita Granville in *THESE THREE*, directed by William Wyler (United Artists)



Jean Arthur and William Powell in **THE EX-MRS. BRADFORD**, directed by Stephen Roberts (Radio)

the sight of a dinner-jacket makes me back out of the nearest bar. **The Thin Man** has cost us dearly, and I hope Perry Mason is the heaviest price we'll have to pay. But just as it seemed Warren William would crack from his ruthless labouring at insouciance, along came the genuine article, the original Powell himself with a daft, ironic partner several degrees better than Myrna Loy. Jean Arthur should need no belated praise. She has acted her way up from the Mary Pickford days and the Mary Pickford ways, and the finished product is a comical, upstanding, girl. Stephen Roberts, a new name to me (though my Motion Picture Annual tells me I should be ashamed of myself), has learned a trick or two from Victor Fleming, I suspect, and only the general outline from W. S. Van Dyke.

Of the other American films, **Klondyke Annie** was the worst Mae West to-date, but still Mae West, which in these days of lost horizons and **Sparkenbrokes**, can thankfully remind us that Jane Austen is still dead and that sex is a thing to be kidded and burlesqued and made to look a nicer Dan Cupid than the Garbos and the Morgans would

have us make it; **Magnificent Obsession** was the champion agoniser of the year and introduced Robert Taylor, whose playboy looks coincide with the international situation to make him the undeniable Valentino of next year; **The Littlest Rebel** revealed Shirley Temple as finally a miracle of talent and vitality and impossible to overlook; **Dangerous** enshrined Bette Davis in a re-hashed caricature of her Somerset

Maughan part; **Show Boat** offered a *reprise* of the luscious, carefree days of 1928, with the Mississippi still a river to sentimentalise but not to travel on, and Paul Robeson living up even more to *Time*'s acute comment—"He looks like Africa and talks like London." **Steamboat Round the Bend** was one of those endless, authentic regional pieces that Hollywood does most honorably. It was not thought pretentious enough to show in London. I saw it in Godalming and it was worth fifty **Show Boats**: Will Rogers cracking sadly into his bib, Irvin Cobb mug-pulling perhaps more than necessary and qualifying for the vacant title of Marie Dressler, but straightforward lovely photography and recreation of Baton Rouge (I suppose)



Peter Lorre and John Gielgud in **SECRET AGENT**, directed by Alfred Hitchcock. (G.B.D.)



Paul Muni in **THE STORY OF LOUIS PASTEUR**, directed by William Dieterle

(Warner)

around the 1890's, careful writing, and a fair, clean handling by John Ford. **Thirteen Hours by Air** was an almost brilliant thriller and brought back from the dark recesses of our memory the corrupt, angelic face of Alan Baxter . . . I don't know yet whether he's the best actor on the screen or just a selfish man with the looks of a college boy. Two more pictures will tell.

The British films of the quarter have kept the flag only wavering. **Limelight** was abominable, often vulgar simply from writing the dialogue in pseudo-American and not trusting its characters to be recognisably English: another hopeless example of our trying to do all the things we never could or will do—dancing, pathos, gayety. **Broken Blossoms** was a painstaking, and sometimes praiseworthy, remake of the old classic which dare not be shown along with the comparatively alive original. **Secret Agent** was not the best of Hitchcock but it's only when the film is over that you still want to see a film. While it's showing there's no way of knowing all this engrossing detail is just a build-up to John Gielgud and Madeleine Carroll showing, in the hugest close-up since **King Kong**, that he loves her and she loves him. Hitchcock is no Lang, but in the photoplay world he stands, with perhaps Norman Walker, for our total self-respect.

There was **The Story of Louis Pasteur**, a careful

photoplay, nearer the stage than it might have been (in all cinema, films about medicine set the precisest opportunity for using their natural material—syringes, and test-tubes, and mental states—as protagonists innate in the cinema method) but Paul Muni moves supremely from one great characterisation to another, and here, after the cocky border-town boy and the vain, inarticulate, immigrant miner of last year, we have his best performance, a perfect assumption, at six thousand miles, of a French bourgeois.

At the very end of the quarter there came Fritz Lang's first American film, **Fury**. There is no time or space here to sit down and choose the magnificence of adjective which will justly represent the quality of a great film and at the same time titillate the doubters to rush away and see it. And the notice must wait. But for now, I should say that no film of this year will touch it short of a miracle, that this is Lang's best film by far, that if this were a film about the Ruhr or South Wales it would not possibly have been shown in any country; and that to Hollywood and the American censors must go irrevocable credit for turning out about their own country a movie that in any other part of the civilised world would have been instantly banned as subversive, disorderly, and a subterranean growth from the Communist party.

THE ROBBER SYMPHONY

In order to assess this film properly, it is necessary first of all to forget the word "symphony" in the title, with its uneasy suggestion of recondite but muddled analogies between films and music, and to ignore altogether the affectation of the hoarding announcement, displayed for all to see but few to comprehend, asserting that this is the first "composed" film. Such pretentious generalizations serve only to obscure the ultimate issue: to the viewer all that matters is whether the thing itself is effective, and any innovations of approach or technique, supposing they exist, must be allowed to speak with their own voices. Theory—to be supported only by the most thorough and explicit analysis—comes afterwards.

What the film does show is a sound appreciation of the screen-value of fantasy, made strong and assisted towards atmospheric unity by an exhilarating lightness of touch, by the pervading presence of a series of attractive musical motifs, and by a tempo as revealing as it is deliberate. The fairy-tale plot, which concerns itself with the pursuit through Alpine country of a small boy belonging to a band of street-performers, by a company of robbers who have hidden a stocking full of gold coins inside his piano-organ, is rightly simple in idea, and allows full scope for ingenious development. The importance of the music is unmistakably stressed in the opening, where an overture is played through at length by a complete orchestra, a brief shot of which appears once more at the close. Dialogue is not absent, but has been reduced roughly to a minimum: it is interesting to observe that after the long musical beginning



Directed by Friedrich Feher

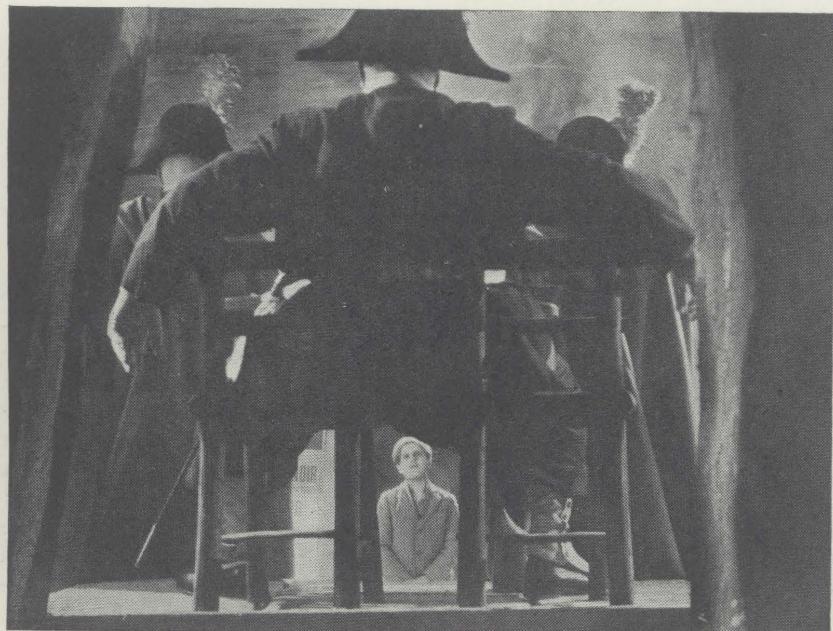
(Concordia)

the entry of the human voice is actually a trifle disturbing.

Technically, the production is in many ways excellent. There is little indication of any confused striving after effects—the directness of the dream-passage, linked transparently to reality by the barking of the dog, is a case in point—and the photography is good, the camera-positions expressive, and the cutting neat and accurate. The acting is as finished and professional as most of the other elements. The first part of the film is thus largely successful, but the second half is less assured. This is due not to length as such, nor to any disabilities inherent in the method, but to a common difficulty of construction—the working-out of the theme to a smooth and still convincing conclusion.

The intimate alliance of music and fantasy is in principle wholly commendable. But, whatever the form of the music in itself, the combination is not symphonic, but, rather, operatic. Here perhaps may even be opera's legitimate successor—the transmutation of that hitherto over-synthetic medium into something more complete and closely-knit.

A. Vesselo.





MERLUSSE, directed by Marcel Pagnol

By courtesy of the Curzon Cinema

CONTINENTAL FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselö

BY now a Continental quarter would be hardly imaginable without a spy-film, a "gay Viennese" film, and an operetta or so. All these categories are duly represented in our latest selection, intermingled with one another here and there for better measure. Apropos particularly of the search for gaiety, an interesting sidelight is thrown on the evolution of an epithet under the stress of stock association, by the appearance recently of a poster billing *Men and Jobs* as a "gay Soviet film." So elegant a whimsy should not pass unnoticed.

Fully-fledged spy-films are well-known to have only one possible plot, and the Austrian adaptation of the Orczy work, *The Emperor's Candlesticks*, creates no precedent: its slim variations are all according to the rules. Its director offers us an undeniably shapely husk, and the Curzon armchairs satisfactorily prevent us from asking for more. A throwback to *Maskerade* (we will refrain

from calling it "nostalgic") is provided in the ballroom scenes at the opening. In *Liebesmelodie*, from Lehar's "Clo-Clo," Vienna also proves true to type. The exterior photography is good, Marta Eggerth sings prettily—and what more is there to be said? except that a scenario never remarkable for originality is not raised to heights of comedy by some weary by-play about illegitimacy.

From Lehar to Flotow, from "Clo-Clo" to "Martha"; and here too, this time quite unaccountably, with a change of title—to *Letzte Rose*. There are one or two well-conceived passages of cutting, to bring out the rhythm of the music: the same sort of effect was present in *On Wings of Song*, and this no doubt, if on a more considerable scale, is what Friedrich Feher implies by the word "composed." But in these altogether artificial surroundings such occasional virtues are swamped. The whole of the last half-hour is a tiring procession of foregone conclusions.

Annabella wins no distinctions in *Anne-Marie*, a romantic nothing about fliers, five men and a girl, and what-not. At the end we feel like repeating, with heavy symbolism, the closing words, "Nous avons tous besoin d'un jour de soleil." None of the foregoing films is ever much more than efficient; seldom less, but in 1936 that is no matter for extravagant congratulation. The Curzon especially has seemed to make a point of the chocolate éclair: it does, however, from time to time make a more valuable contribution, and *Merlusse*, falling just out of the last into the present quarter, is one of these desirable rarities. Withdrawing itself with subtle understanding into the secluded universe of a French Lycée, this film recreates for us—and with a profound realism—the curious atmosphere of that abstracted existence. One can easily believe that the director, Marcel Pagnol, might once himself have instilled learning into these ink-blotted desks, have clanked awfully down the long corridors, have enforced reluctant discipline in play-ground and dormitory. The boys are recognizably individuals, the attribute "boy" more marked in them than the attribute "French"; and if the adult characterization has at times less of conviction, that is perhaps understandable in a sphere where the adult, despite authority, is always something of an intruder. But the chief member of the cast remains the Lycée, within whose self-contained boundaries this fanciful tale of the translation of an ogre has all the validity which in a more worldly environment it would lack.

From Poland comes another youthful interlude, in slightly different style. *The Day of the Great Adventure*, shown by the Film Society, has its setting in a boy-scouts' holiday-camp in the Tatra mountains, and the trend of the plot, dealing with the pursuit and capture of a band of cocaine-smugglers by the boys, follows in a notable tradition—as *vide Emil and the Detectives* and *The Robber Symphony*. Essentially a well-made film, unencumbered by the melodramatic Victorian paraphernalia of a *Sans Famille*, and bringing us into close and admirable contact with most of the characters, it suffers nevertheless from a failing which ambitious producers would do well to guard against, an excessive concern with photographic values. There is too much scenery, too much ski-ing, too much snow, beautifully done but still superfluous, continually hampering the flow and movement of the story, whose length becomes now and then very obvious.

The Film Society's season ended with Mr. Edmond Greville's *Marchand D'Amour*, a picture whose sexual preoccupations suffer little concealment. Watching this film, one can hardly doubt that the director is up to all the dodges; and if this were all that he intended to demonstrate, he has done it to perfection. The production is crammed with ingenuities of technique, mainly visual, and many, in their smart allusiveness, strongly recalling the methods of French surrealism; more, the effects are well-timed, the acting good, and certain minor

developments amusingly engineered. But such emphatic concentration on the details of outward technique can rarely justify itself; and there is nothing inherently surrealist about this very ordinary story, of *Passion Off the Set in a film-studio*. The emphasis rests where it has been put—on the surface: in particular, one regrets the blurring of romantic soft-focus work, and the multitude of trick-wipes. The latter seem to have gained popularity in some Continental circles just when the better-class American film, having used them to death, has begun to discard them.

Germany, *via* Studio One, sends us a new version of *The Student of Prague*, and comparisons with the post-war silent film, odious or not, are clearly invited. In maintaining an even level of competence throughout, the present interpretation improves perhaps on the earlier one, which memory records as having been uncertain and halting at the outset; but the feeble beginning was more than compensated for by the power and intensity which the silent film drew to itself as it advanced, and this tremendous addition of strength, which made it in sum one of the most memorable of all films, has no real counterpart in the more polished but less profound talking-version.

A misdirected attempt has been made to tone down the supernatural element—as if the mysticism of the theme were not the whole film!—so that Baldwin's reflection never walks out of the mirror, and the sorcerer becomes a respectably jealous lover, casting his spells not for shadowy cosmic reasons but on a semi-personal provocation, such as any sophisticated cinema-audience can appreciate without effort. Not all the points have been missed or minimized, and the film has its moments, especially as it nears the end; but they are too scattered ever to be fully effectual.

Within the quarter, but too late for inclusion in the body of this article, come *Janosik* (Czechoslovakia) and *The Phantom Gondola* (France). *Janosik* is described as telling the story of "Czechoslovakia's Robin Hood," and those who know their celluloid Robin Hoods will agree that the estimate is as accurate as possible. The main ingredients are readily foretold: the handsome and heroic bandit, performing easy feats of athleticism and daring, the wicked, teeth-gnashing villains, the camp-fire songs, the communal revelries—even to the grim conclusion in best *Robin Hood of El Dorado* style. There is also some noteworthy photography, such as Continental importations which are otherwise mediocre are liable to display, and a modicum of Russian *montage* to help us pick out the high spots. *The Phantom Gondola*, from a best-seller by Maurice Dekobra, is full of the most obscure "mysteries" and "secrets," in none of which it is possible for us to take the slightest interest. Of such is the kingdom of best-sellers. The film is further distinguished by the possession of a hero and heroine with hardly any acting-capacity and even less romantic appeal.



WORK WAITS
FOR YOU
(Strand)

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Reviewed by A. Vesselo

WORK WAITS FOR YOU (Gt. Britain)

Production : Strand Film Company for the Ministry of Labour
Direction : Alex. Shaw
Photography : H. Fowle
Length : Silent : 3,200 feet
Distribution : Non-theatrical : apply Ministry of Labour.

ON THE WAY TO WORK (Gt. Britain)

Production : Strand Film Company for the Ministry of Labour
Direction : Edgar H. Anstey
Photography : George Noble
Length : 1,800 feet
Distribution : Theatrical : apply Strand Film Company

It used to be said that art had no concern with morals ; but to anyone now observing the methods and progress of the documentary film, with its insistence on propaganda, the position must seem to have complicated itself beyond hope of unravelling. Yet perhaps our need is less to choose between conflicting solutions than to integrate the two. The prime duty of art is to reveal reality, with truth and insight ; and exactly that—propaganda or no—is in its own way the duty of the documentary film. Indeed, if the terms "art" and "propaganda" could both be forgotten for a generation, our aims might be immensely clarified.

The two films above have been made as propaganda for the Ministry of Labour : as such, in their political and social implications, they may or may not meet altogether with approval. What is important is that they undertake a definite task, a task of significance at the moment, and execute it straightforwardly, without being led off too far into side issues. Their contact with reality and with the conditions of life which they describe, as also with the audiences to which they appeal, is immediate.

Work Waits for You is addressed to unemployed adolescents in the mining villages of the North, and its purpose is to urge on them and on their parents the virtues of the Government's schemes for juvenile transference to other areas. Simply, and without any undue overlay of specious argument, they are shown what is actually being done, and how boys and girls are being distributed over districts in the Midlands and South for occupational training or for direct entry into jobs. Special attention is devoted to living arrangements, and the camera takes its audience inside the hostels and approved lodgings : where it is permitted to watch the occupants at close quarters in their hours of relaxation. The film is silent, to be taken round with a portable projector by officials who will make their own comments : the action is purposely slow, with an eye to the temperament of those who are to see it. It starts perhaps a trifle hesitantly, and

with a longish sub-title ; and there is a passage near the beginning, using the allusive superimposition, which seems doubtfully in place : but otherwise the film makes all its points plainly and well, and the short interspersed titles do everything that is required of them.

On the Way to Work is a sound film, for theatrical showing in the depressed areas, and is designed to encourage unemployed men to join the training camps. It uses the same intimate approach as its companion, again coming surprisingly near without making the characters' behaviour seem in the least abnormal. Young men are shown being questioned, and later being given instruction according to their abilities, both in the industrial towns and at an instructional centre in the country, where we see them joking together, at their work, at meals, and at play. Imperfect adjustment of sound-transitions produces a certain impression of disconnectedness ; and the now popular practice (see **The Mine**, below) of splitting up much of the background commentary among people directly concerned with the action, needs modification for smoothness' sake. Technical flaws aside, however, the film has its moments that are memorable.

THE RED ARMY (Gt. Britain)

Production : G.-B. Instructional, under the supervision of A. W. McKenny Hughes, D.I.C., F.R.E.S., Commentary by Howard Marshall

Direction : Andrew Miller Jones

Photography : Jack Rose

Length : 972 feet

Distribution : G.-B. Equipments

This film has nothing to do with Communism. "The Red Army" is the name given to the hordes of bed-bugs which hide by day in any convenient crevice and emerge by night to feed on human blood. In **Housing Problems** we were offered a single horrific glimpse of one of these disagreeable insects scuttling up a wall. Now the bed-bug has earned a whole film to itself, and no glamour-girl ever deserved her rise to stardom more.

This is a nauseating film : it is also one which every cinema might exhibit, and every occupier of a house, whether he lives in a tenement or a palace, should see. Here at any rate there can be no two opinions on the point of social value ; though the film certainly raises problems beyond itself—such as, the

existence of such things as slum properties—about which there is plenty of room for dispute.

Mr. Howard Marshall, seated at a desk, opens and closes the picture, and his voice provides a pertinent commentary all the way through. Apart from a loud shriek, uttered by a genteel-looking lady in a four-poster bed on discovering a bug on her person, there is no other sound. Included are scenes showing the hatching-out of the baby bug from the egg, its growth, the sloughing-off of its coat, become too small to hold it, after its first meal ; and, among other unpleasant sights, a bug in enlarged view sucking at a human arm. It is made suitably clear that to be bug-ridden, even for the owner of a mansion, is a misfortune, not a crime, and a few elementary (too elementary) precautions are sketched out. The calling-in of the Medical Officer of Health is urged at an early stage. The film could advantageously have been longer and much fuller ; but at the moment we can be extremely thankful that it was made at all.

THE MINE : (Gt. Britain)

Production : G.-B. Instructional ; in co-operation with the Safety in Mines Research Board

Direction : J. B. Holmes

Photography : F. Bundy

Diagrams : R. Jeffryes

Recording : W. F. Elliot and J. L. Douglas

Length : 1612 feet

Distributors : G.-B. Distributors

Here is a further encouraging example of the documentary film at grips with living material. This is an actual mine which the camera has been deputed to explore, descending precariously into the earth to do so ; though the mine selected is one with up-to-date equipment, to obviate risk. It has been the photographer's task to represent his scenes accurately with the aid of the minimum of apparatus ; and without either unnaturally overlighting them or keeping them too dark for the eye to see. He has



THE RED ARMY (G.B. Instructional)

achieved his aim dexterously : in the circumstances, the quality of some of his underground shots is remarkable.

The impressionistic sound-effects—a sinister voice whispering “Fire-damp!” and a wheezing noise followed by moans, imposed upon a shot of something outwardly quite different—are unworthy of their surroundings ; and the string of varying local accents in the commentary leads one to consider, perhaps ungraciously, how far this method may not be simply a distraction instead of an intensification. Part of the early explanatory matter, too, is not sufficiently lucid. The great strength of the film, however, is displayed in its latter stages, where the details of operations carried on chiefly below the surface are selected and recorded—with all the relevant noises—with such truthfulness of feeling that the mine seems practically to invade the auditorium. After this, lapses can be easily forgiven.

STREAMLINE (Gt. Britain)

Length : 1,005 feet

SHIPCRAFT

Length : 748 feet

PROPELLERS

Length : 738 feet

DRY DOCK

Length : 969 feet

POWER IN THE HIGHLANDS

Length : 844 feet

Production : G.-B. Instructional

Distribution : G.-B. Distributors

This group of films, by an infelicitous contraction, is referred to as a series of “interests” ; and the added fact that they appear to consist largely of old material re-pruned is no *a-priori* commendation. But the job, it must be confessed, has been done with skill, and the films are on the whole a good deal more than the odds and scraps that they might have been. The level fluctuates : the weakest is

Propellers, which is without sound and wears a definite air of disjointedness. In general, however, their photography is good, their internal sequence—if not invariably complete in detail—clear, their natural sound realistic, and the commentaries in particular well-delivered and to the point. The best passages have been put together in an extremely workmanlike way : the filling of the dock by pipes in *Dry Dock*, and certain sections of *Streamline*, the latter an expansion of the only part of *Progress* possessing the slightest value, are effective instances.

Included in the series is the last film produced by Paul Rotha for G-B I—*Power in the Highlands* ; which opens among the clouds over the Grampian Mountains, and follows the hillside streams down to the lochs, whence their contents are deflected and carried to generating-stations to be transformed into power. Some of this film has about it an odd atmosphere of ingenuousness, plainly brought out in the attitude which sees intrinsic beauty in ugly iron pylons, just as the Express Building was quoted in *Face of Britain* as an illustration of architectural progress. Several of the background noises are also a little too patently isolated in order to create emphasis, and the vocal chorus whose swelling earnestness closes the picture is inclined to be amusing rather than impressive. Yet the film is nicely made, and pictorially enlightening : a pleasant little essay, somehow made more pleasant, not less, by its very artlessness of outlook.

Versions of several of these films, and of *The Mine*, reviewed above, have been specially prepared without musical accompaniment for educational purposes.

STEEL (Gt. Britain)

Production : Ace Films

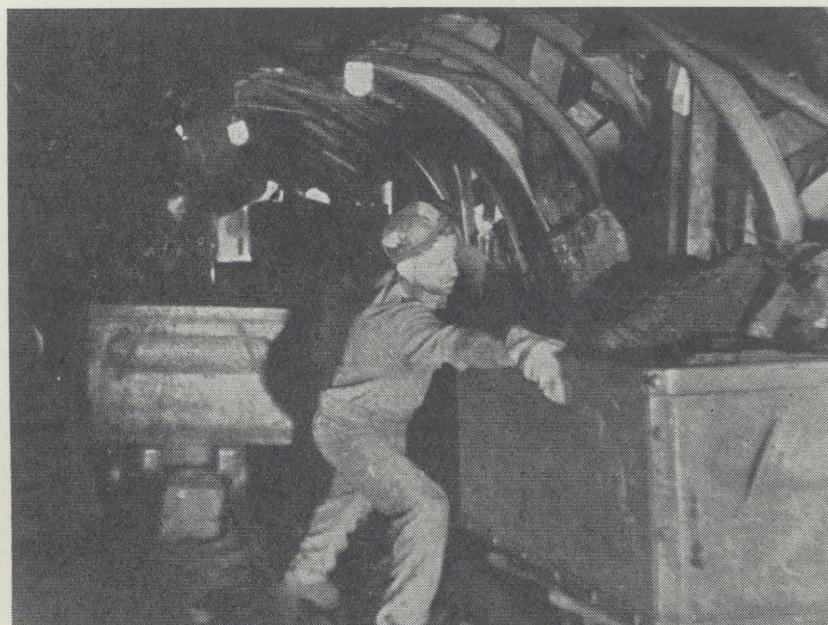
Direction : Capelli

Photography : John Silver

Length : 2,000 feet

Distribution : Ace Films

Factory-chimneys, furnaces, operatives on their way to work, have become so much the stock-in-trade of the documentary film that their reappearance may pardonably awaken apprehension ; yet in this case one’s forebodings are happily disappointed. The film summarizes generally the processes involved in the turning of scrap-iron in mass into highly-tempered steel, for such purposes as the making of tram-lines ; and does it economically, intelligibly, and with excellent craftsmanship.



THE MINE (G.B. Instructional)

OUT TO PLAY (Short Film)

The shots are well-arranged, the photography pleasing, the cutting methodical; commentary is explicit and properly set-out, and there is a musical accompaniment which, displacing natural sound, expresses accurately the atmosphere of the pictures.

There are a few wipes grouped together about the middle of the film—not many, but they could be dispensed with; and the end, with its rather obvious reversal of the beginning, might profitably be abbreviated. But what one notices chiefly, and admires, is the way in which the director—with the minimum degree of romanticization—has maintained throughout an even, rhythmic flow of movement and pictorial action, without permitting it to interfere in the least with the matter-of-fact continuity of his explanations. A two-sided feat rare enough to be worth pointing out.

OUT TO PLAY (Gt. Britain)

Production : Short Film Productions

Direction : Harold Lowenstein

Photography : Edwin Catford

Length : 925 feet

Mr. Lowenstein's attitude towards the slum children whom he photographs at play in the streets and in the parks is frankly romantic: as is indicated by the forgiving smiles of his householders on discovering that urchins have tampered with their door-knockers, and, in the final playground sequence, by the interjected head-against-the-sky shots that we know so well. But neither this nor the presence of certain technical defects, such as inconsistency in photographic quality (though some of the shots are very good) and a lack of absolute assurance in handling the sound-track, can invalidate his endeavours. His children have been handled with understanding, his close-ups are often vigorous, his post-synchronized sound-effects—street-organ, voice, traffic-noise—arranged with evident thought. This is an attractive and promising little film: one would only urge, for the future, rather more attention to solid continuity and less to impressionism, which sometimes looks too much like continuity gone wrong.



BLACK JOURNEY (France)

Production and Direction : Leon Poirier, Georges-Marie Haardt and Louis Audouin-Dubreuil Expedition

Photography : G. Specht

Music : J. E. Szyfer and Paris Opera Orchestra

Length : 3,410 feet

Distributors : Ace Films

This record of a two-and-a-half years' expedition through the North African continent provides an appropriate sequel to *East Meets West*, which chronicled at rather greater length a similar expedition, led also by Georges-Marie Haardt, from Beirut to Pekin. Out of the vast mass of material obviously available, the camera has here selected tellingly; and with the assistance of but a single introductory map of the route has succeeded nevertheless in presenting a graphic and continuous report. The major part of our interest is focussed upon the native black races and their comparative manners and rites: the atmosphere thus transmitted to us is vivid, sultry and bizarre. Chieftains on bicycles; Sultans with a hundred wives; pygmies descending from the tree-tops; women ritually deformed; tom-toms beating out news over forest and swamp; musicians performing on strangely-shaped instruments at grim phallic ceremonies: these things all hold a dark fascination for us. Yet none of them, nor again the earlier spectacle of bones bleaching in the desert, seems finally more grotesquely significant than the sight of Hausa tribesmen clad in mediæval armour—apt accoutrements of barbarism.

The commentary, in English, has not that excess of weight to carry which commentaries sometimes have, and suitably rounds off the meaning of the picture. Now and then, however, its implications appear less purely anthropological than may be desirable: such a phrase as "Frenzied by this hellish ballet" seems to add little of dramatic value.

TERRE D'AMOUR (France)

Production : Les Artisans Associés

Direction : Maurice Cloche

Photography : Gérard Perrin and Marcel Grignon

Length : 2,552 feet

Distribution : Apply Film Society

THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA (Gt. Britain)
MILESTONES

Production, direction and photography : A. Moncrieff Davidson

Lengths : 858 feet ; 598 feet

Distributors : Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

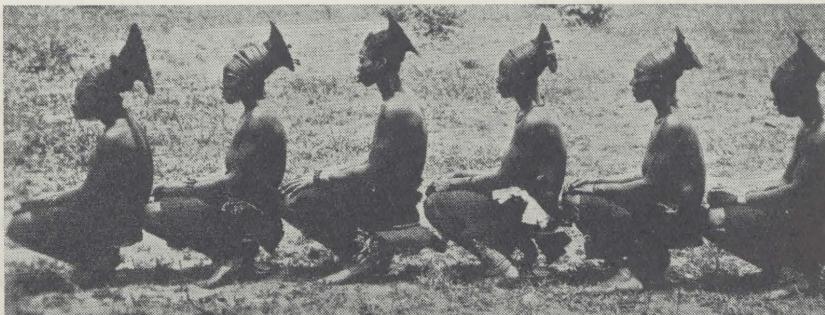
The three films under review have a generic significance ; falling clearly into one of the most difficult and yet most frequently encountered of all documentary categories. The documentation of places, buildings and monuments has a strong appeal to the collector's instinct in us ; but it raises problems of continuity, of co-ordination between commentary and picture, of the imposition of movement on a static subject-matter, of avoidance of congestion, and so forth, which no-one has ever succeeded in properly overcoming.

Terre D'Amour deals with Provence, opening with a preliminary geographical and natural survey, and proceeding at some length, by means of an historical sequence through the centuries from Roman times downward, to depict the traces left by great events—in château, abbey, ruin, and triumphal arch. The part allotted to the human element is so minute as to be practically non-existent. Photography, illuminated by the sunlight of the Provençal landscape, is first-class ; pictorial transitions are direct and unforced, and the items bound satisfactorily together by a sound and not too-romantic commentary ; the historical progression is straightforward, the material, in detail, of considerable interest : but underneath, the difficulties still remain. The incessant ramblings of the camera are beautifully smooth but negatively intentioned ; being there simply to offset the essentially static nature of what is seen, by the creation of a superficial movement, taking things in little by little. These leisurely perambulations can be occasionally

slumberous. At certain points, too, commentary and music are somewhat in conflict : the method of the educational film, which inevitably prefers meaning to atmosphere, may here be noted. The picture as a whole, eschewing the flashy and the pretty-pretty, reflects with a becoming gravity the stateliness of its subject ; yet the obstacles in its way are not, one feels, entirely surmounted.

The maker of the other two films, Mr. Moncrieff Davidson, may be remembered for his *Stonehenge* and *White Horses*. In *The Birthplace of America* he guides us over those parts of England which in one way or another are associated with the United States, showing us for instance the original Boston, New York and Bunker's Hill, and the statues of Lincoln and Washington in London. The commentary, delivered in an American accent, is passably efficient, urging at the end the simplified if unexceptionable moral of *Hands Across the Seas*. There is less of the moving-camera shot than in the previous film, but what there is is also a good deal shakier. In the transitions, the sharp wipe-dissolve obtrudes itself ; while a fortuitous division into "chapters" helps to mark the difficulties of continuity. Allowing for these and like failings, however, the general impression is probably fairly near its aim.

Milestones is a rapid and popularly-conceived survey of curious milestones all over England. There is not time to go very deep, and the commentator, who has sometimes to forge his own connecting links out of air, now leans in consequence to the facetious. Motorists are expressly named as the chief audience in view.



BLACK JOURNEY (Ae)



TUDOR ROSE, directed by Robert Stevenson

(G.B.D.)

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ART OF FILM PRODUCTION by Andrew Buchanan (Pitman, 5s.)

FILM PRODUCTION by Adrian Brunel (Newnes, 7s. 6d.)

Reviewed by Robert Stevenson

ACH of these books on the film is written by an expert in film production, which reminds us that there never was an art before whose practitioners were so articulate. Musicians rarely write about music and painters only with extreme obscurity about painting; indeed, the rule was that those who can, do, and only those who can't, write books on how to do it. But the cinema, as usual, is different: everybody writes a book, from Rötha to Pudovkin, and when tired of cultivating our Muse, we publicly dissect her.

Of the two books under review, Mr. Brunel's is the more detached. He has no message to give the world and wisely keeps his aesthetic theories for the privacy of the home. Consequently, he has plenty of space for practical advice about production, which he offers with great clarity. For this clarity I am personally grateful: so many of the film books I read I am unable to understand at all. They are written in terms of a second-hand Hegelian dialectic,

which seems to me to be confusing and not particularly apposite. However, I observe that their reputation with my friends is directly proportional to their obscurity, and I suppose therefore that Mr. Brunel's book will not be taken seriously at all.

An interesting feature of the book is a series of appendices by specialists. Mr. Brunel realises that making a film is more than one man's job, and leaves the technical experts to speak for themselves. This they do, each with great competence, and usually contriving to leave the impression that his particular job is the one that really matters.

Mr. Buchanan has a different approach: he is a man of two worlds, for though a commercial producer of great skill and artistic integrity, he finds himself spiritually tempted by the *avant-garde*. Consequently, he has a preface by John Grierson and a number of aesthetic theories with all of which I find myself in total disagreement.

For instance, he maintains that a film is not a

film unless it "portrays something which no other medium could possibly portray." This is surely very thin aesthetics. On the same argument, *Richard III* is not a play at all, since it portrays what was also excellently portrayed in Holinshed's chronicle.

Again, Mr. Buchanan asserts that "speech restricts picture movement and tempo, simply because one cannot alter the speed of the human voice." This is the *avant-garde* serpent speaking in him. Buchanan, the film producer, knows that speed of speech is only one factor in the tempo of a talking picture: it is not dialogue that restricts tempo but incompetent directors who cannot handle dialogue.

But fortunately, with Mr. Buchanan common sense will keep breaking in. And then he abandons the fashionable theories and gives us an able exposition of his craft. Particularly brilliant are

the chapters addressed to the amateur: if amateurs would take his advice on what and what not to film, there would be fewer cameras sold second-hand in disgust. Not that I think that amateurs ever take advice: when I was an amateur, I was convinced that no professional could teach me anything. Nor has the tradition changed: my amateur friends often explain to me what is wrong with British films and even more frequently offer to put it right.

But for those who want to learn, professional or amateur, these books are definitely books to buy. I read them with enjoyment, learnt a great deal from them I did not know before, and laid them by, uncertain whether to marvel more at the wisdom the authors had stored up or the lucidity with which they had set it down.

AMATEUR FILMS by Alex Strasser (Link House, 7s. 6d.)

THIS is a valuable book because it tackles the fundamental problems of film making without ever taking the ordinary mortal out of his depth. As the translator points out in a footnote the word "montage" has somehow got itself a bad name among plain blunt men. The consequence is that they tend to overlook and even avoid what is, whether they like it or not, an indispensable step towards making films, which other people can look at with pleasure. Mr. Strasser puts this point very clearly, speaking of the necessity for planned shooting and careful cutting in even a holiday travel film, he points out that "it is a mistake to think that the journey can be most pleasantly recollected by bringing back shots of every conceivable place and building visited. This can be done better by snapshots and an ordinary roll-film camera, for in this case the results can be put in an album and supplemented by written details below them. Such a division of film shots in an "Album" is unfortunately impossible, and the reason for this is clear. Still pictures can be looked at for any time—long or short—that may be convenient to examine the scenes they portray. The film shot runs through the projector at a set speed, and is not concerned as to whether the audience would like to examine it for a longer time, or not see it at all . . . The strip of film, therefore, is compelled to say what it has to say, not in a single scene, but in a series of shots following one another. In each sequence of shots there must be some definite connection between the separate shots if a satisfactory result is to be attained. In other words, while snapshots of the

Tower Bridge, the pier at Blackpool, Canterbury Cathedral, and the New Forest may be put in an album without any trouble whatever, shots of these subjects put together in a film would only arouse a feeling of irritation in the audience." Or again, stressing the strength of mind required for scrapping of surplus footage "It is hard for any amateur to see his expensively-bought and carefully-photographed film falling into the waste basket. Every cut goes to his heart and there are many of us who would like to do away with the whole business of "cutting," so that we could run our treasured shots through in full. But we must think of things in another way. It is not the length of a film which pleases an audience, but the form and style in which it is made. It is against common-sense to refer to the short clippings of celluloid as "film," for waste—which cannot be used in any way—is just useless material, and deserves no consideration from us. It is, in fact, like the odd tiles and bricks that are left over when a house is built. No architect would think of putting a few extra ornamentations on the front of a house just because there were a couple of hundred bricks left over when the builders had finished."

The author has purposely avoided the inclusion of any detailed technicalities in this book, considering that they are better dealt with separately. This has been justified in so far as it has rendered the book a pleasant and easy piece of reading.

Mr. Smethurst has made so good a job of the translation that one loses sight of the fact that it is a translation.

H. D. W.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FROM INDIA

Surya Namaskar, Salute to the Sun, is an unusual film inspired by an unusual man. The Raja Saheb of Aundh, a ruling prince in the Bombay Presidency, has joined a series of movements into a few minutes' complete bodily exercise, done them himself for fifty years, taught them to his wife, sons, daughters, grandchildren, made them compulsory in every school and college in his State, and had them filmed—he and his family and subjects taking part. (Titles are in Hindi and English: 16 mm., silent and 35 mm., sound.) The movements are ancient, brought to India 5,000 years ago (perhaps from Persia) by the son of Sri Krishna. Anatomically and physiologically correct, they affect digestion, breathing, and (through the spine) the central nervous system. Great care is given to breathing in, holding the breath, and breathing out. Before each series words are recited, vowels having special value because of the lung-vibrations caused. The phrases are even more important: *Om Hram Mitraye Namaha*, Salute to the friend of all; *Om Hrim Ravaye Namaha*, Salute to one praised by all; and so on. They are a dedication to an all-pervading Power whose symbol is the sun, and unite body, mind, and spirit in making the human a clean and perfect temple for the divine.

R. E. ROPER,

ART DIRECTION AT NEWCASTLE

The Tyneside Film Society in co-operation with the Department of Fine Art, Armstrong College, organised a highly successful exhibition (June 5th—13th) of the original works of four Art Directors now working in England. The exhibition included over eighty original drawings, with corresponding stills from the films, by Alfred Junge, Erno Metzner, Andre Andreev and Vincent Korda. The material for the exhibition was loaned by the artists and by London Films, Gaumont-British, Associated Talking Pictures, and Toeplitz Productions.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Film Music, by Kurt London (Faber & Faber, 12/6).

Colour Cinematography, by A. B. Klein
(Chapman & Hall, 25/-).

Waterloo in Wardour Street, a novel by Eric Siepmann
(Chatto & Windus, 7/6).

The Man Who Could Work a Miracle, a film treatment,
by H. G. Wells
(Cresset, 3/6).

Things to Come, a film treatment, by H. G. Wells
(Cresset, 3/6).

COMMENTARIES

by R. E. Roper, M.A., M.Ed.

SOUND-films make a double demand on the observer. In order to arouse an intellectual or emotional activity they call upon both eye and ear. Some idea of the complex nature of the sight-sound appeal and the activity aroused may be gained from the facts that light travels about 186,000 miles and sound 1,120 feet a second and that there are about 12,000,000,000 nerve-cells in the human brain. Obviously, under such conditions, an extremely delicate technique is necessary if good results are to be obtained, and a scrupulous attention to tiny details hitherto thought unimportant. We have to reckon in frames rather than feet, in hundredths rather than in halves of a second.

With educational films, the desired activity is mainly intellectual. In ordinary lessons, sound is the chief stimulus, whilst sight (of pictures, diagrams, etc.) is merely an aid, too much of which distracts the ear. The film lesson relies mainly on sight, with sound as an aid, too much of which distracts the eye. In educational films, sound is subsidiary to sight. Unfortunately, it is often grossly misused. Whether the sound-film be educational, instructional, topical or travelogue, there are certain general principles which must be observed. Where children are concerned they are of vital importance.

Ear and eye

The ear and its nerves form a sense-organ more highly specialised than the eye and more capable of precise selection: reacting to air-borne stimuli it works more directly. The eye takes in more at one time: receiving ether-transmitted impulses of a frequency of 435 to 764 million millions a second (which break down the "visual purple" in the rods of the retina) it needs a period for recovery before becoming ready for further seeing. Attentive seeing alternates with non-seeing or vague seeing. The ear may be said to work mechanically, the eye chemically.

In school the direct appeal is mostly made to the ear, so its associations with conscious thought and response become more instant. The eye tends to be used (as in reading, writing, etc.) more as a means for stimulating oneself than for receiving stimuli from another. When seeing in this way, we disregard what we hear. Again, the brain-activities associated with the eye are often more unconscious: they more easily lead to parallel or divergent trains of thought. Wandering eye-attention, a poorly

focussed lens, the use of the whole visual field of the retina with a dispersed interest, may lead to "day dreams," or even to a cessation of conscious thought. This dispersal of eye-focus and attention occurs in crystal-gazing: it may also be used to produce the earlier stages of hypnosis. Similar effects may be caused by a poorly focussed film or a vibrating projector.

Sight, sound, and thought

Eye-attention is more prone to become vague: ear-attention is more practised in giving quick conscious response: each to some extent inhibits the other. Herein lie special advantages and disadvantages for sound-films. Apt words at the proper moment assist eye-attention: ill-chosen or ill-timed wording distracts it. Attention is never steady; it is always flickering. Sound, if not perfectly suitable, will distract it from sight: even when suitable it causes a swing of attention away from seeing and toward hearing. Then follows an oscillation between the two, at the worst lopsided, at the best equally distributed: the divided attention then settles round the major interest or the most powerful stimulus. Such division of attention is tiring, and causes a period in which either seeing or hearing may be subnormal, or rouses a feeling of resentment which makes both impossible. With sound-films the major interest or stimulus should always be that of sight.

A film is a process: it is something that happens. The commentary may enrich or accentuate the action but should never supplant it. The words must be concerned with what is taking place, and must not arouse thought-processes which—however interesting or valuable—are side-issues. Events on the screen take a predestined course: the observer's mind should follow this and never stray into a parallel or divergent track suggested by a spoken word. Sound should recall the attention to sight: at any fork or cross-roads of interest it should be a signpost with one arm only, not two or four. The action of a film falls into definite phases, and words belonging to one of these should never overlap into another. Should this happen, sight will be stimulating a new interest while sound is insisting on the old: this causes division of attention, discord and discomfort. Perfect harmonising of phrase and phase can only be obtained by meticulous care. Never begin a new phrase immediately the old one

ends : always provide a pause, however slight, before the next begins. Sparseness of phrase and delicate choice of words can minimise fatigue.

Properly combined, sight with sound can secure a more compact mental activity than either separately. The combination is not one of sight and sound only, but of sight and sound and silence. With 80 per cent. sound and 20 per cent. silence the effect may be bad : 20 per cent. sound and 80 per cent. silence might be good. There is no fixed ratio between them : each film has its own needs. Broadly speaking, fifty-fifty is a good point from which to begin saving on sound. An overloaded commentary first distracts and then defeats attention, and finally destroys the very activity of mind it was intended to assist.

Making a commentary

To make a commentary, first see the film through two or three times, and sense its rhythm. Then decide where words should re-inforce sight, or prevent unwanted associations. While the film is running *say* very simply what you feel is needed : do not write the words if someone else can take them down. Gradually, fit the lilt of your phrases to the timing of the action, always subordinating sound to sight. Having written down a first version, ruthlessly cut out every unnecessary phrase, word, syllable. Avoid nasals at the end of a word, and

sibilants everywhere. Choose words in which the last sound is clean-cut and easy to pronounce, especially at the end of a phrase or sentence. Adjectives, nouns and, on occasions, even verbs may be discarded, and only those words used which most simply and with least shock guide the mind amid the maze of associations awakened through the eye. Care over these and similar details may not secure perfection, but will, at least, prevent the grosser forms of error.

Above all, realise that commenting is a new form of art, conditioned by the timing and sequence of events on the screen. Some, whose work is primarily directing or editing, could hardly write a bad commentary if they tried. Skilled as they are in observing movement, their thoughts and words are shaped by its rhythm. Unhappily, there are others. It would be hard to say who does most damage to the nervous system, the slick professional stimulating an artificial excitement by means of polysyllabic superlatives, or the conscientious teacher trying to cram an extra fact into the victim's ear. The purpose of sound is to aid the intellect ; too often it merely succeeds in infuriating the emotions, mouthing platitudes or profaning solitude, like the voice in Rupert Brooke's poem :—

You came and quacked beside me in the wood.
You said "*The view from here is very good !*"
You said "*The sunset's pretty, isn't it ?*"
By God ! I wish—I wish that you were dead !

BANTU EDUCATIONAL KINEMA EXPERIMENT

SOME interesting conclusions have been reached by the Bantu Educational Kinema Unit who have been showing in Africa films acted by natives in co-operation with the Experiment. Films have been produced on Soil Erosion, Milk Production, the work of the Savings Bank, and also a comedy, and all have been well received by native audiences. The films have had a post-synchronised sound accompaniment, and the making and showing of these films under primitive conditions has naturally involved the solution of many formidable technical problems.

The work has been carried out entirely by means of 16 mm. sound-on-disc. The discs used have been of the cellulose-coated type and the details of the recording mechanism have been largely designed by the Unit's own technical staff. Vibration has been the principal obstacle which they have had to contend with and they have now overcome it sufficiently for satisfactory recording of speech though it still interferes somewhat with the recording of music. The building at Vugiri where post-synchronisation is carried out, has walls treated with two thicknesses of wire-netting stuffed with wood-wool and dried grass. This kills echoes, but is not sound-proof. The building is divided into two rooms, the recording-room and the studio. In the recording-room is a projector chain-coupled to the main recording-table shaft, throwing a picture on to a transparent screen two ft. wide, placed in the partition wall which divides the room from the studio. The commentators sit in the studio with their eye on the screen and improvise the words which each actor is supposed to be uttering. It is found that after four or five rehearsals they can do this

without a hitch, though, of course, it is a great advantage if the actor himself is available for speaking the post-synchronised words of his own part. Improvisation is preferred to the learning by heart of set parts, since, in this way, it is found that more natural speech is obtainable. In the case of instructional films, however, a prepared commentary is read aloud by a native commentator who has an assistant standing by him with his eye on the screen to help him with his cues.

The travelling projection equipment consists of a 16 mm. projector geared to a disc turntable. Electricity is provided by a 2½ h.p. 2-stroke engine, driving a double-current generator giving 900 watts D.C. and 150 watts A.C. Two permanent magnet moving-coil speakers are used, placed on tripods behind the screen. The screen is 10 ft. wide and is stretched across iron tubular uprights. As the screen is of semi-transparent calico, it is possible to place the audience on both sides of it, and, in this way, as many as 5,000 persons have quite a good view simultaneously.

Experiments are in progress for the designing of an even cheaper and simpler projection unit, in order that several may travel simultaneously. It is proposed to turn the projector by hand, obtaining synchronisation from click-signals off the turn-table of a spring-driven gramophone, received in headphones worn by the projection operator.

A film of typical scenes of life in this country is under consideration, as it is felt that this would interest native audiences. It is possible that some parts of this will be put together from films contributed by amateur volunteers.

THE CLASSROOM FILM

By F. E. Mills, Demonstrator in Geography, London School of Economics

This article on the Classroom Film, with special reference to Geography, is supplementary to the article by Mr. Mills which was published in the last issue of "Sight and Sound."

COLLABORATION between the maker and user of any kind of teaching equipment is obviously very desirable, but it is not always realised that for the well-being of the teaching film—certainly for the geographical film—altogether greater collaboration is essential between teacher and producer than is necessary for the satisfactory production of other teaching instruments; for the very good reason that it is fundamentally different from them.

Laboratory equipment, the textbook and the epidiascope provide opportunities and have limitations, but the teacher in making use of them, can select and modify and even contradict: the instruments are passive and he is their master. But the film is dynamic and it has a will of its own. The teacher cannot turn casually from the film to the class as he can from the board: not even with a whole battery of switches, for the film cannot be stopped without destroying its sequence and annoying the pupils. Again, the teacher must accept or reject the whole of a film, for if he attempts to modify its order or emphasis he may find himself and the class in confusion; and if he attempts to contradict, he may find that he is less convincing than the film.

These are not arguments against the classroom film, but against the unsatisfactory film. Even a mediocre wall-map has a few points of usefulness in the classroom and its evils can be countered at leisure. But the mediocre film is absorbed as a whole; its evils register and it passes on, leaving the teacher enraged and helpless. The film is not passive and the effects of a poor film may easily prove beyond the control of the teacher. Mediocrity in films is anathema.

Teaching and background films

There are two main types of films used by the teacher of geography. The majority are drawn from miscellaneous sources: advertising films, "interest shorts," and documentaries. They have little or no relation to systematic teaching and cannot generally be made to fit organically into a

lesson: they are shown to give a "background" to normal teaching. On the other hand, there are a few films which have been specially designed to fit into courses of lessons and may be called "teaching" films.

Let us examine examples of these two types. Last year two parallel experiments were undertaken at the "Sandringham" Central School, Forest Gate; one made use of the G.-B.I. "Regional Geography of the British Isles" series of "teaching" films, and the other, conducted by Mr. J. S. Weyman, B.A., used the G.-B.I. series of Indian "interest shorts" as "background" films. There is no room here for details, but it should be noted that the Indian series did not allow direct relationship with the series of lessons given, whereas with the "teaching" experiment the film material was made the basis of the lessons, but the teacher was allowed to introduce fresh matter to develop the lessons just as he wished.

The averaged results of detailed tests gave in the case of the "teaching" film groups an increase of 12 per cent., and in the case of the "background" film groups an equally large decrease as compared with the corresponding "oral" lesson groups.

It must of course be realised that the films may have had a considerable untestable value in "bringing reality into the classroom," but whatever this "experience" value may have been, the "background" films did not succeed in making up, as far as assimilated—or at least testable—knowledge was concerned, for the time they took away from direct oral teaching. With the "teaching" films on the other hand, the time was more than made up: indeed, with the better films there was a testable improvement of the order of 15 to 25 per cent., and it has already been shown in a previous article that, used in other ways, the same films may give figures rising up to 40 per cent.

Producers must be guided

It seems probable, therefore, that the casual products of the studios that can only be used for "background" purposes, will occupy only a transitory position in the classroom, awaiting the development and production of the specialised "teaching" film. But will it be possible to leave this entirely to the professional producer, even if he is making them for no other purpose than for school use?

From FRUITLANDS OF KENT
(G-B. Instructional)



From GUERNSEY GRANITE, produced by
B. D. Smith (Visual Education)



From N.W. DERBYSHIRE : THE USE OF
THE LAND, produced by Dartington Hall
Film Unit (Visual Education)

If we examine in some detail the results of the experiment with the commercially produced "teaching" films, several points emerge. Firstly, the usefulness of the films used in the film lessons varied very considerably from 20 per cent. advantage in the case of *Wheatlands of East Anglia* Reel I, to a mere 2 per cent. in the case of *Town Settlement*.

Secondly, some subjects are more suited to film teaching than others, as witness the greater test advantages of the two agricultural films, *Wheatlands* Reel I (with 20 per cent.) and *Fruitlands of Kent* (with 15 per cent.) as compared with the two town studies, *Wheatlands* Reel II, dealing largely with the town of Norwich (with 10 per cent.) and *Town Settlement* (with 2 per cent.). The subject matter also has a different effect upon boys and girls as for instance, *Wheatlands* Reel I, with its emphasis on mechanical agriculture was a "boys'" film (boys, +25 per cent.; girls, +15 per cent.), as compared with *Wheatlands* Reel II, where the buying and selling of the market touches the girls' interests more closely (boys, +4 per cent.; girls, +16 per cent.).

Thirdly, a detailed analysis of each separate point of the lessons shows that whereas *Wheatlands* Reels I and II, did not materially affect the results for the subsequent teaching of the classes (—2 per cent. and —1 per cent. respectively), *Fruitlands* notably helped (by 15 per cent.) and *Town Settlement* considerably hindered (by 14 per cent.) the subsequent teaching of other aspects of the same subject. These results are not very easy to explain, but it seems significant that *Fruitlands* had the clearest, and *Town Settlement* the most confused, sequences. The former also confined itself mostly to the careful description of fruit-farming, whereas the others made attempts by commentary and caption to give "geographical" explanations.

It is obvious that, as no film can effectively teach, it must not itself interpret its own material, and thus dictate the teacher's method: for in so doing its arguments will foul the ground for the teaching that must follow, and create a confusion that will largely counter its otherwise good effects.

Enough has been said here to make it clear that the Producer will need a great deal of advice from the Teacher, and possibly, his close collaboration at all stages.

Teachers must be film-minded

It is equally necessary that the "teaching" film should not be left entirely at the mercy of the pure pedagogue. There are still teachers who see only a threat to their profession thinly veiled in celluloid. Those who have tried the film in the classroom know better than this, but among these there are some who are content with the casual "background" film, others whose only conception

of a teaching film is a kind of moving lantern slide showing a single process for two minutes or so, and others who are trying to force film into their own essentially oral teaching system and finding it a very intractable child.

The greatest success is not to be attained along any of these narrow lines, for unless teachers understand something of the nature and idiom of filmic expression, the peculiar genius of the cinema will remain untried in the classroom, and very great benefits to education may be missed. How many teachers have studied the cinema for its own sake, have tried to understand its nature, and then seriously thought of the possibilities that this new medium might have in store for education? How many have considered the best ways of introducing—rather than adapting—the cinema into the classroom, to help teach a generation of film-minded children?

How many teachers have thought of the possibilities of using the emotional power of the film as a means of leading the strong feeling and quick sympathies of the adolescent into educational channels, as scouting has directed the boy's physical energies? Psychology teaches us that feeling is the fount of all curiosity and effort.

How often, indeed, do we teachers lament our inability to move our pupils to more than a polite interest in the lot of (say) the Chinese Peasant, when we would arouse them to a keen curiosity born of sympathy? Surely, here is our opportunity to let the Chinese Peasant do this for himself through the medium of the film. And yet, miscellaneous "background" films often arouse derision by their emphasis on customs chosen for their quaintness to the western mind, and their complete omission of any reference to normal life conditions: and "instructional" films, by carefully excluding any human appeal arouse, at the most, a mild interest to replace the polite interest given to the teacher; and at the worst indeed, I have seen this type of film create frank boredom: "It's not like the pictures."

It is a paradox to realise the great power of the commercial cinema and then to introduce the cinema into the schools bereft of its essential characteristics. It is futile to produce a teaching film with a textbook technique.

Film technique for teaching films

In this connection let us consider the opinions of some children on the matter. Mixed classes of children ranging from 12 to 16 years of age were shown three films of very different types and given a questionnaire to answer afterwards. The films used were: The G.B.I. teaching film, *Town Settlement* having a formal intermittent commentary; *Dutch Cheese*, a Gainsborough "interest short," dealing with production and marketing and having a quick rhythm, a racy

commentary and lively music; and lastly, the G.B.I. *Quiet of the Country*, Reel I, dealing with a number of separate farm operations of the winter months and having natural sounds (animals, machinery, etc.), but no commentary on the film: the teacher explained this film as it was being shown.

The results, of course, give only an indication of the opinions of the children on the various types of films represented, as the subject matter and individual merits of the films are reflected in their preferences: it is particularly unfortunate that *Town Settlement* was chosen to represent its type of teaching film. Sixty-one per cent. preferred *Quiet of the Country* (two-thirds were boys), 34 per cent. *Dutch Cheese* (threequarters were girls) and 2 per cent. *Town Settlement*.

It is impossible here to discuss in detail the many interesting criticisms made by the children, but the three ways in which interest may be attached to "teaching" films is plainly indicated. Firstly, by leaving the teacher to connect up the material of the film with systematic geography. Two thirds preferred the teacher's commentary: "We can understand the teacher and he can answer our questions."

Secondly, this may be helped by filmic means: effective photography, a cutting rhythm, music and close-ups relevant to the subject. For instance, two-thirds liked music: "It is interesting and gives expression to what they are doing."

Thirdly, and most important, by a convincing presentation of real conditions. *Quiet of the Country* with its natural sounds and undisturbed by the voice of an impersonal, arm-chained commentator, succeeded very well in this, and it is a pity that the film was centred on animals and dung rather than on the farmer and his life. If explanation must be given by the film, then it is the job of the central character to explain in his own words and his own way, as was done so effectively in the recent film *Housing Problems*.

Another good point about *Quiet of the Country* was its attempt to connect up a few details to provoke thought: a close-up of a wheel splashing through a rut and a muddy boot being cleaned suggested winter rain and clay. But it was only an embryonic attempt. Herein lies another of the great possibilities of film, for being very largely independent of time and place, related material can be brought together so as to suggest associations to the child and give him a chance to find reasons for himself.

Films and field-work

The geography "teaching" film can not only be a substitute for field-work in places too far away to be visited, but it can be superior to field-work in many respects: by being able to present many places and changing seasons in a short time: by

giving a real human experience often unobtained by ordinary field-work: by the possibility of selecting only the typical material and using it to develop one simple theme; and by provoking original thought.

The child, aroused by a real live picture of, say, a crofter and his family struggling with an unfriendly climate to wrench a living from a meagre soil, would be sufficiently interested and curious to make some attempt to connect the facts and worry out their explanations. The teacher could, by preparation and subsequent discussion, pool the children's mental efforts, help them to those deductions they could not make by themselves, and generally guide the material into whatever channels he wishes.

The Ideal teaching film

The film itself, not attempting to instruct, would gain its unity from its central human story. As a self-contained whole, such a film would be an ideal teaching tool, adaptable to the teacher's needs, and ensuring the maximum co-operation from the pupil. It would also have a much wider range of use than an "instructional" film made to teach one thing and with commentary and titles directed to one narrow age group.

No available films succeed in supplying these exacting demands. Many films present convincing human types and beautiful scenery, but very few succeed in connecting up the human interest accurately with the geographical environment. Jenny Brown's *Rugged Isle* is a most outstanding example: it is convincing, intensely human and typically true. But it is very long for classroom use. A few, such as *Wheatlands*, Reel I, have managed to develop effectively and in short space a simple theme, and to deal with a sufficiently wide and relevant topic to be conveniently worked into the usual classroom conditions of very limited time and an unlimited syllabus. Extremely few—but notably B. D. Smith's *Guernsey Granite*—induce logical thought by the juxtaposition of related material. But here many documentaries demand a lively display of wits if not exactly logical thought.

Films which successfully united all these aims would be of the greatest use in the teaching of geography, and might well revolutionise its methods of teaching. It may be that within a short film it will be impossible to achieve a unity of these aims, but let it not be through lack of trying. If unity is impossible, then compromise must suffice: but at least let it be a conscious compromise, intelligently made to suit each case, and not just an accident.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FILM SCHOOL

The two scholarships offered to readers of *Sight and Sound* to enable them to attend the London Film School have been awarded to Mr. J. D. Hill of Bradford, Yorkshire, and to Mr. G. Buckland Smith of Wickford, Essex.

EDUCATIONAL FILMS

BRITISH INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS

BRITISH Instructional Films Ltd., 84, Wardour Street, W.1, announce that 16 mm. sound film versions of the following films are now available:

Botany: Life of a Plant, Pollination, Dream Flowers, Starting in Life, Plants of the Underworld, Scarlet Runner & Co., Strangler; **Geography:** Mediterranean Island, Trails and Rails, Almost Arcady, Harbour, Southern April, Springtime in the Scillies; **Physics:** Surface Tension (2 reels); **Zoology:** Woodwasp, The Newt, Safety in Hiding, Merlin, Short-eared Owl, Marine Models, Aphis, Brock the Badger, Glow-worm; **General:** Flight Machine.

G.-B. INSTRUCTIONAL

G.-B. Instructional Films Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1, announce the following additions to their library of 16 mm. sound films. **Biology** (produced under the supervision of Dr. Julian Huxley and Mr. H. R. Hewer): The Frog (2 reels), Marine Sand Animals, Annelid Worms; **Scottish Regional Geography** (made with the collaboration of an Advisory Panel of Glasgow Teachers): Life in the Highlands (2 reels), Harvests of the Soil, Heavy Industries, Water Power, Coal; **Physical Geography:** The Story of a Disturbance; **Hygiene and Public Health:** The Red Army; **History:** Mediæval Village, The Expansion of Germany; **Physical Education:** Analysis of Agility Exercises.

G.-B. Instructional also announce that in view of representations made to them by Physical Training Organisers, it has been decided to provide mute positive copies, for sale, at a cost of £7 per reel, of the series of films on Physical Education. Mute copies are also available, at the same price, of the series of films on Scottish Regional Geography, so that the Scottish teachers associated with the making of these films may make use of both mute and sound copies.

EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL SERVICES

Educational and General Services Ltd. (Cinema and Radio Supplies), 37, Golden Square, W.1, announce that thirty 16 mm. silent films, made in co-operation with the Glasgow Education Committee, are now available on hire to schools and similar institutions.

The series includes films on domestic animals in their normal surroundings, farming operations, methods of transport and industrial processes. E.G.S. will also distribute English 16 mm. silent versions of a number of French films on physical geography made by M. Jean Benoit-Levy, and educational films from Sweden and other foreign countries.

A programme of films selected from the Library was shown to an audience, invited by the British Film Institute, at the Hall of the Royal Geographical Society (by courtesy of the Council) on Tuesday, June 16th, at 8.30 p.m. The guests were received by Lady Oxford and speeches were made by Professor Winifred Cullis and Dr. Julian Huxley.

DANCE

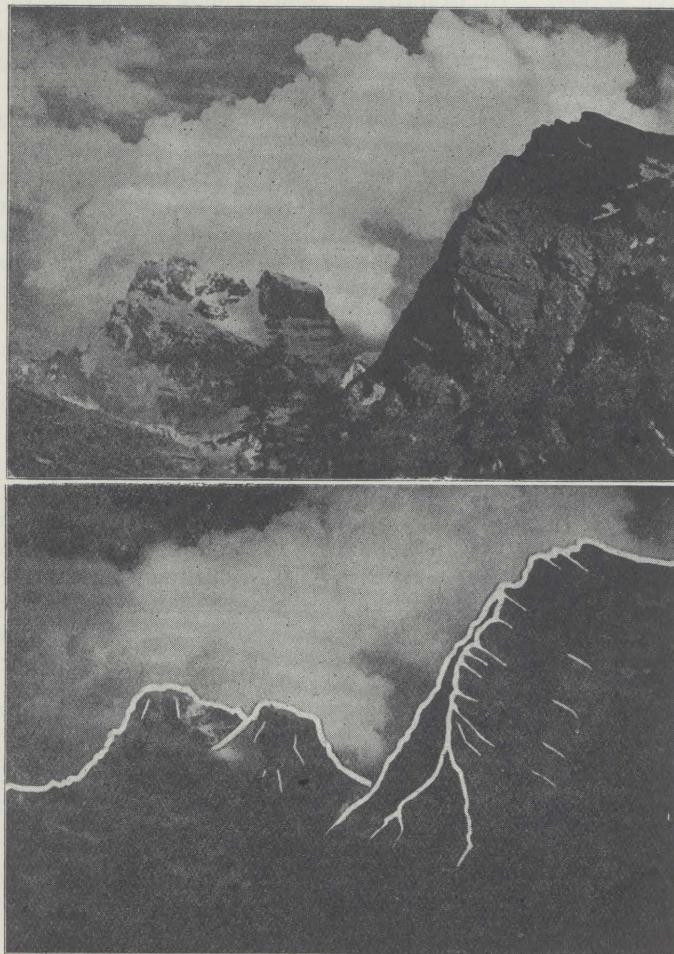
KAUFMANN FILMS

Steuart Films Ltd., Chelmsford Studios, North Fambridge, Essex, announce that they are now the sole agents for hire or purchase of the Dance-Kaufmann 16 mm. silent dia-grammatic films dealing with physics and mathematics.

VISUAL

EDUCATION

Visual Education Ltd., Temple Road, London, N.W.2, announce the following additions to their library of 16 mm. silent films: **N.W. Derbyshire**, The Face of the Land (2 reels), The Use of the Land (2 reels); **Sheep Dip**; **Bananas**; **Guernsey Granite** (2 reels); **Across the Coast Range, British Columbia** (5 reels).



From THE MOUNTAIN by Jean Benoit-Levy

(E.G.S.)

ELEMENTS OF SUB-STANDARD PROJECTION SILENT PROJECTION

This article is the first of a series of six articles on the elements of sub-standard projection, specially written for teachers by Mr. H. D. Waley, Technical Officer of the British Film Institute. Subsequent articles will deal with Sound-film projection; Choice of a projector; Normal running; Care of projectors and films; Projection emergencies.

WHILE it is possible to handle a cinema projector by rule of thumb it may be assumed that the average teacher will prefer to have some insight into the way in which it works. Figure I shows the simplest possible form of projection system—lantern-slide projection.

In theory, projection requires four elements only—a source of light (the lamp), an object (the slide), a projection lens, and a screen. Given the correct position of these four, and a complete absence of stray light, an inverted image of the object would appear on the screen. In practice, however, it is necessary to add a fifth element—the condensing system—in order to make the fullest possible use of the light-source, as otherwise the illumination of the image would be too weak for practical purposes.

The optical system

In Fig. I a mirror behind the lamp and a pair of condensing lenses in front of it collect the light and concentrate it on the lantern slide. The lamp is a filament lamp, designed to give intense light from a small area of filament enclosed in the smallest possible glass bulb. The mirror behind it reflects light back into the condensing lens and the condensing lens concentrates this light, and the direct light from the lamp-filament, into an intense beam which passes through the image on the slide and enters the projection lens.

When the projection-lens is at the correct distance from the slide and the screen respectively, a well-

defined image of the slide appears on the screen.

The longer the focal length of the projection lens the further it has to be from the slide and the smaller the picture on the screen at any given throw.

It will be noticed that the optical system of the moving picture projector (Fig. II) is identical with that of the still picture projector (Fig. I). The difference between the two chiefly lies in the fact that a film has been substituted for the slide together with mechanism for moving the film in a series of jerks.

The intermittent movement

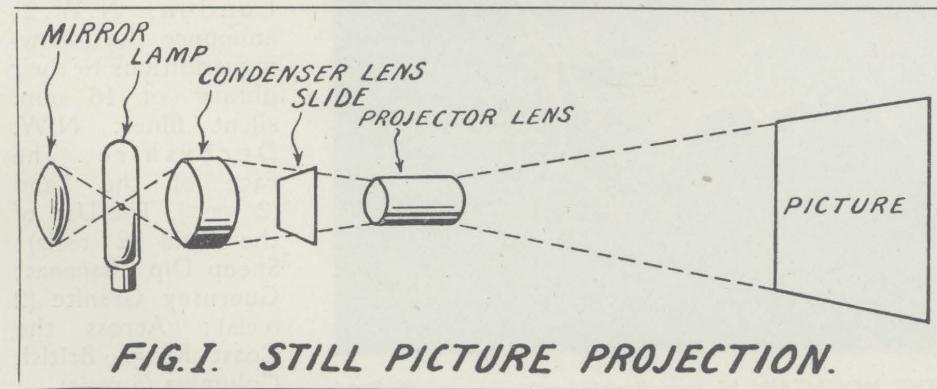
16 mm. projectors employ a variety of devices for imparting intermittent downward movement to the film. Some use the maltese-cross gear and intermittent sprocket which is standard on the full-sized 35 mm. machines used in cinemas, others a "beater" which moves the film with less strain on the perforations, and others a "claw." The diagram shows a claw of exaggerated size, because it happened to be easy to represent in a simplified form. In order that this intermittent movement may take place without intolerable clattering and jangling, such as thwarted early efforts to impart a stop-and-start action to glass slides, the weight to be moved must be reduced to a minimum. Accordingly in 16 mm. projection the image is only about half the size of a postage stamp, while the material on which it is carried is thin and light.

The gate

From this fact arises the necessity for the second essential of moving picture projection—the gate. This is a rigid support which holds the film flat in the appropriate plane, perforated by a window which frames the actual picture in course of being projected. The function of the gate is not only to hold the flimsy film-material flat, but also to grip it with sufficient pressure to steady it after each shift; on the other hand, the gate must not exercise excessive pressure, or the film will be strained by the gate's resistance to the shift.

Sprocket-wheels and film-loops

Now, although the weight of each image has been reduced to a minimum



by small size and light material, a new difficulty has had to be faced which arises from the great number of the pictures which require to be projected in quick succession. They are necessarily on a continuous reel and the weight of the whole reel is considerable. Therefore means have had to be found to avoid shifting the whole reel every time a single picture-shift is made. It is for this purpose that the top sprocket and the loop of slack film below it, and the bottom sprocket and the loop of slack film above it, exist.

The sprocket wheels (which are shown at top and bottom of Fig. II together with the rollers on hinged arms which keep the film in position) draw the film down steadily off the top spool and on to the bottom spool. The loops absorb the difference between their action and that of the claw. Accordingly a few inches of film only have to be propelled by the claw.

The shutter

There now remains only one essential part of the moving picture mechanism which has not been accounted for—the shutter. The function of this part is to prevent the audience from seeing one picture in course of sliding off the screen, and the next in course of sliding on to it. Accordingly the shutter (seen in full black in Fig. II) cuts

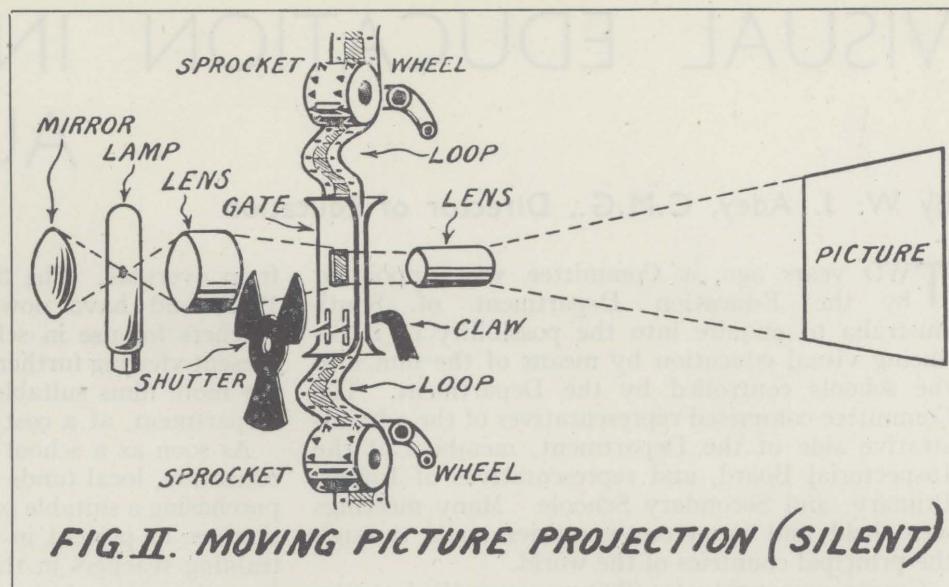


FIG. II. MOVING PICTURE PROJECTION (SILENT)

off the light from the gate while the picture-shift is taking place. Consequently, although the audience enjoy the illusion of seeing a picture lit by an unbroken flow of light, what they are actually looking at is a series of pictures interrupted by short periods of darkness. In order to deceive the eye and avoid a painful "flicker" effect the alternation of light and dark has to have a rapidity of some 40 changes a second. It would be inconvenient for a number of reasons to take or project 40 different pictures a second. The necessary rapidity of alternation between dark and light is therefore attained by having either one or two extra blades on the shutter, which give one or more extra periods of darkness while the film is at rest, in addition to the dark period while the film is being moved.

GLASGOW SETS AN EXAMPLE

At the recent week-end conference of the Scottish Educational Film Association Mr. R. M. Allardyce, Director of Education for Glasgow, spoke on "Film Supply and Previewing" with special reference to the work of his own Committee.

The Glasgow Education Committee is forging ahead with its plans for providing its schools with a complete educational film service. A 16 mm. silent projector, costing from £25 to £30, is to be supplied to each of its 230 schools. The Committee will also buy six 16 mm. silent projectors of a dearer type, £60 to £100, and six 16 mm. sound projectors for special use. At present, 100 class-room projectors and three of the dearer type have been purchased, but Glasgow has not yet bought a talkie apparatus. The reason given is that Glasgow does not want sound films until the teachers ask for them.

Glasgow also wants colour films and arrangements have already been made for a regular supply of them. Furthermore, the Committee intends to use full-sized and 9.5 mm. as well as 16 mm. films.

At an early stage, the Education Committee found that a Film Library was absolutely necessary, and the present stock amounts to over 200 films, the majority being 16 mm. and the remainder 9.5 mm. Additions are constantly being made but, since it is realised that no library can ever be adequate for the varied requirements of individual

teachers, the schools are allowed to hire as they wish. Films from the Empire Film Library are hired in bulk through the central office.

Side by side with the official scheme, Glasgow teachers have evolved a private system for making their own films. These, after certain financial adjustments, become part of the stock of the school in which the teacher is employed, with the stipulation that they are loaned to other schools as required.

In the matter of previewing films before a decision is made as to their purchase or hire by a library, a Film Section Committee has been set up, consisting of three experienced teachers who advise the Director on questions of general policy. They are assisted by two other teachers, both science masters, who have made themselves experts in the subject, and splendid service has also been rendered by the two panels of a committee of geography teachers which deal respectively with the preparation of scenarios and with viewing.

Three significant facts emerge: that there is no doubt in the minds of the Glasgow Education Committee as to the necessity for an extensive film service for its schools, that Glasgow is building up its own library of *silent* films, and that both in the choice and in the making of films for use in Glasgow schools, as well as in general policy, it is the teachers who are consulted.

VISUAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

By W. J. Adey, C.M.G., Director of Education

TWO years ago, a Committee was appointed by the Education Department of South Australia to enquire into the possibility of introducing visual education by means of the film into the schools controlled by the Department. The Committee comprised representatives of the administrative side of the Department, members of the Inspectorial Board, and representatives of Infant, Primary, and Secondary Schools. Many meetings were held and numerous enquiries made through the principal countries of the world.

Grants amounting to £200 were supplied to the Committee by teaching organisations interested in the movement, and, in addition, the sum of £100 was made available by the Department. With this amount, the Committee has purchased two projectors for demonstration purposes and over fifty films of 16 mm. size all of which have been viewed and carefully selected from a large amount of material that was available for purchase.

An analysis of the films purchased indicates that four films have been purchased for Infant schools, forty-two for Primary, and four for Secondary; classified by subjects the analysis is as follows: General Science, twelve films; Industrial Processes, fifteen; Geography, nine; Natural History, five; Physiology, five; English, one; and General Knowledge, four. In addition, films on The Banana, The Port of Bristol, and Dental Instruction have been given as a gift to the Department. The total amount expended on films and projectors to date is £284. Many of the films have been obtained

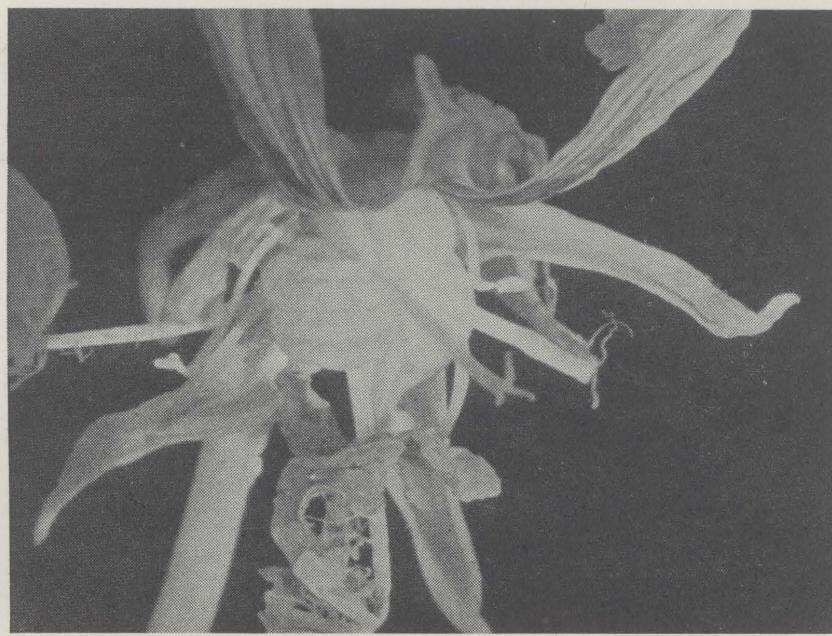
from overseas. The films arrived during October, 1935, and have now been prepared by expert teachers for use in schools. The Committee is at present viewing further films with a view to purchasing more films suitable to the requirements of the Department, at a cost of about £125.

As soon as a school becomes interested in visual education, local funds are raised for the purpose of purchasing a suitable projector. Classes of instruction are at present in operation for the purpose of training teachers in the technique of visual education, the manipulation of projectors and the care of films. The films will form a circulating library from which schools may borrow by arrangement.

The following conditions apply to the loan of the equipment:—

- (a) That no school, except by special arrangement, shall have the use of a Departmental projector and/or film for a longer period than three days on each occasion borrowed.
- (b) That the hire of a projector for Departmental schools shall be at the rate of one shilling per day.
- (c) That non-Departmental schools may hire the Departmental projectors on the same basis as Departmental schools with the exception that a charge of two shillings per day shall be made.
- (d) That a charge of three pence per day per 100 ft. of film shall be made when films are hired by Departmental schools.
- (e) That non-Departmental schools may use the film library at a charge of six pence per day per 100 ft. of film.
- (f) That approved teachers only shall be permitted to use the projectors and films.

The Department proposes to issue booklets describing each film in detail. The teachers using the films will be expected to make themselves conversant with the reading



From THE LIFE OF A PLANT
(British Instructional)

matter supplied and to see the films before showing them to the class. The teacher will thus be able to turn the silent films into talkies as he or she shows them. It will be possible to stop and repeat the film where necessary.

The Consuls of the various countries have been asked whether free educational films and slides, showing industries, scenery and other suitable topics, could be given to the film circulating library. The Department is in touch with various firms offering free industrial films, with a view to including them in the Departmental circulating library, pro-

vided that they are suitable. Before acceptance, the Sub-Committee will view these films and report on their suitability. The Dental Board of South Australia has loaned to the Department several 16 mm. dental films for exhibition in connection with the general health lessons given to school children.

It is anticipated that the introduction of suitable films into the schools will prove to be an innovation of extreme importance and be the means of conveying to schools matter that would be extremely difficult for teachers to impart successfully.

RURAL ENTERPRISE

By H. E. Parsons, Headmaster, East Hagbourne Junior School, Berkshire

HAVING been Headmaster of a rural school for the past 15 years, I realise the danger of falling into a groove and, to avoid this, I have used many methods, including the B.B.C. broadcasts to schools. Four years ago, it seemed to me that the Educational Film had a big and valuable future in rural areas. The great difficulty was—the initial cost.

I approached a local photographic dealer and, after several conversations, he agreed that if he provided a 16 mm. projector for silent films together with special screen and other necessities, it would probably prove to be a reasonably sound investment as well as an aid to education.

The arrangement we came to was that I should be in charge of the apparatus, operate it when it was used, and be responsible for its care and that he should receive a hireage charge of 3s. per performance for educational purposes and 10s. for hire for private parties. I also undertook to demonstrate the machine to any potential purchasers of similar outfits.

I drew up a scheme of weekly film programmes for October to March. Two other schools wished to join in, so that it was possible to book the films for three consecutive evenings each week and to share the total expenses in equal proportions between the three schools. The programmes, lasting 40 minutes, consisted of films from the Empire Film Library and, since they were presented out of school hours, concluded with a recreational film of the Felix type. The total weekly cost shared between the three schools has been about £1. It has been necessary to take a collection to cover the cost but children of large families or whose parents are unemployed are encouraged to attend although they may be unable to contribute. During the past three years, an average of 400 children a week have attended the three performances. Occasionally, a limited number of parents is invited and the majority of them have taken a

very keen interest in our experiment. At present, only one of the schools—a Church school—has been able to use its own premises for the performances and the other two have had to hire suitable halls which has, for them, slightly increased the cost of the performances.

For my own performances, I use a school lesson to prepare, with the aid of atlases, for the coming film programme and, during the performances, I explain the parts of the film that need explaining and, afterwards, I conduct some work in school on the films which have been seen.

After a time, a good Cine-Camera, taking 16 mm. films, was added and with this I have taken a number of school and local films. A very big future seems possible here. Physical training demonstrations, folk dancing, historical dramatisation, etc., would prove of great value and the children naturally take a very keen interest in the possibility of appearing on the screen before their fellow scholars. Tentative arrangements have been commenced locally for the making of a Physical Training Film, and also one on children's pets under the auspices of the R.S.P.C.A.

I contend that, as the machine is perfectly safe and only safety film is used, the programmes should take place in the schools themselves during the normal school day. A room can be sufficiently darkened in most schools for this purpose, at any rate in the period covered by this experiment, viz., October-March. But, in order that the full benefit may be obtained from the use of the films, it should be possible to carry on throughout the school year. To do this, a school would need a special cinema room which could be properly darkened. This could probably be arranged in one of a group of schools as is done with woodwork centres. Children from the schools in the group could be allotted their day and time.

TECHNICAL SECTION

ABSOLUTE MUSIC

by V. Solev

THE recording of sound upon the sound track of a moving picture film is usually done in the following way: a musical instrument is played in front of the microphone, the vibrations of the microphone membrane are transferred electrically to the lamp amplifier, and further to the sound recording apparatus where different parts of the sound ribbon are exposed to different intensities of light by means of an oscillograph or some other device. This method involves a good deal of time, and encounters considerable mechanical and electrical hindrances.

Designed Sound

From the very beginning of the sound picture epoch, A. Avraamov, the Soviet musical theoretician, together with Pfenniger, the German, and Sholpo and Voinoff, former co-workers of Avraamov, have wondered whether it would not be possible to throw light and shade upon the sound ribbon in a direct manner, by photographing upon the sound ribbon certain ornamental figures—drawings or cardboard or paper designs.

At first, the sounds obtained were mostly of the flute timbre type. Later, a three minute "Hurdy-gurdy" item was tried, and the timbre of the street organ, being of simple construction, turned out most successful.

Then Voinoff, made his "piano," all of which can be fitted into a necktie box. Each of its keys, *i.e.*, each half-tone, is represented by a long "comb," which is a schematic record of the real piano. This schematization did not harm the achievement of the purpose. Voinoff complains only about the extreme bass notes, which, he says, having lost some of the overtones, do not sound as rich. Voinoff has not been able to add the necessary little "teeth" to the large basic ones. Voinoff fits his "keys" or "combs" on to the regular appliances for cartoon photography in such a way as to have the "key" exactly on the sound track during the photographing process. In this manner, he has succeeded in photographing two three-minute items; a Prelude by Rachmaninoff, and a fox-trot **The White Monkey**. The Prelude showed especially interesting results. The "designed music" (to be more exact, it was music cut out of paper) came out as an abstract design of diverging circles and prisms. Voinoff has also recorded a cartoon film, **The Thief**, in which he has preserved the rhythms very exactly.

Sholpo, of Leningrad, has introduced methods somewhat different from those of Voinoff, and still more refined. He makes his teeth, not in the form of a comb, but in the form of a round saw with teeth of different sizes, according to the pitch of the octave which the "circular saw" must transmit. The higher the pitch, the closer together must the teeth be. Within the octave, Sholpo regulates

the quantity of the teeth by means of a more or less rapid rotation of the disc, in accordance with which the combs are photographed on the moving picture film with more or less frequency. Recently, Sholpo has substituted slots for teeth; this adds to his discs greater exactness and practicability. Together with Rimsky-Korsakoff (the composer grandson of the famous Rimsky-Korsakoff) he has recorded on a film a number of items by Rimsky-Korsakoff, and a few new works. Anyone who has heard the **March-Trot**—a short jazz piece played on birds' voices—will never forget it. **March-Trot** is a serious contribution to the wealth of world music.

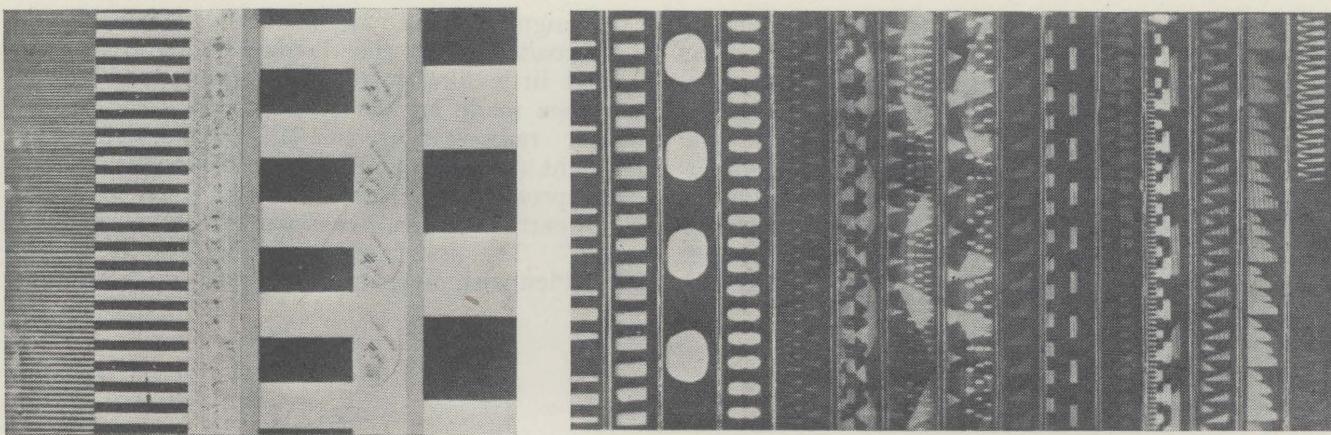
Artificial sound seems most suitable for accompanying cartoon films. Its notes have no reverberation whatever; they do not create an acoustic "atmosphere" (*i.e.*, a sound perspective for the picture to which they are attached).

Generally speaking, music sounds especially agreeable in two cases. One case occurs when, on putting on headphones and hearing an orchestral broadcast with the sound perspective of the concert hall fully preserved, one feels as if one were actually present in the concert hall. Or it may happen that the loud speaker in a room creates the complete illusion of music being performed in that very room. This is the case when the acoustics of the radio studio and of the room with the loud speaker somehow correspond to each other.

Radio utilises this absence of reverberations in "designed" sound very willingly. By broadcasting records of "designed sound," radio, in reality, broadcasts music without reverberation, while the listener hears it with the reverberations of his own room, where the listening process takes place. "The designed music of the radio" cannot fail to harmonise with any premises. Anyone who has heard the "whispering" of radio heroes in some large halls (a thing frequently encountered, for instance, in radio plays) knows well how falsely such acoustic absurdities sound.

Timbrograms—music of the future

All those engaged in work on "artificial sound," have, until very recently, recorded it by means of lines (variable area recording). In Moscow, a man called Tager has discovered unexpected opportunities in shadow recording (variable density recording). Tager's strips of shadow correspond to Shorin's "teeth." Another, Yankovsky, by photographing them on a different scale, has obtained a different pitch of sound but in the same *timbre* as the design taken as the basis. Naturally, he chooses, for the starting point, the most richly sounding notes of each instrument. The fact that Yankovsky's "timbrograms" promise to furnish



Sound tracks for "hurdy-gurdy"

sound of any pitch with the timbre of the best notes of the instrument is of tremendous importance in principle. It is known that the higher the pitch, the poorer is the timbre of any musical instrument. (The extreme upper notes of the piano, for instance, are quite "dry.") This phenomenon takes place because the material used in the making of the instrument (wood, copper, etc.) reflects differently in each case sounds of different pitch. One might say that Yankovsky creates "synthetic instruments" which are not dependent upon any acoustic coincidences, simply because, once and for all, the best sound is taken as the basis.

This possibility is far more interesting than abstract research for "new sounds" in which, up to now, workers in the field of the "designed sound" have been engaged. During the centuries of its existence, our orchestral practice has chosen the timbres most acceptable to our ears (just as Oriental practice has chosen its own timbres).

The modern symphony orchestra is very rich in sounds, and it is impossible to discover immediately something utterly different in this line. But by no means every instrument of the orchestra is in harmonious relations with its neighbours. Orchestra instruments do not represent a finished system ; especially important is the fact that the range of possibilities is different in all instruments. These are the gaps that Yankovsky promises to remedy.

Musical horizons

It would be wrong to suppose that the very first steps open up possibilities for altogether new timbres. These have not been obtained. Until recently, instrumental technique was groping its way towards new sounds. Nevertheless, experience in this field is colossal. During the nineteenth century alone, there were twelve thousand patents dealing with musical technique. The choosing of new sounds, new timbres, and improvement of the already existing ones has, therefore, been a ceaseless process. If it were possible to get altogether fantastic timbres, they would fail to stir the listeners aesthetically.

But it would be an altogether different matter if we could succeed in getting series of intermediate

Sound tracks produced by Sholpo's "circular saws"

timbres, for instance, timbres between those of wood and brass winds, with different sordines. In this case, "designed sound" has justified itself from the very first steps of its existence. Even a few years ago, sounds of the type of different wood wind instruments were obtained. Such intermediate timbres are to-day often obtained by Voinoff, for instance, to say nothing of Sholpo of Leningrad, who has been working by a more subtle method.

The dream of the symphony orchestra reformers, who have in vain struggled for some degree of smoothness of transition between different instrumental groups may be realised by means of synthetic music. The simplicity of the photo-copy method used by Yankovsky, together with the rapidity of Sholpo's method promises to do very much in this direction.

method promises to do very much in this direction. At present, there does not exist an instrument which, apart from musical sounds (*i.e.*, those with regular wavelike vibrations) does not produce also sounds of a disorderly, noiselike character. The whistling of the wind instruments, the rustling of the violins . . . Scraping noises, for instance, form a relatively large percentage of violin sound. Analysis of phonograms will allow us to overcome this also. The noise of "teeth" might be removed from the phonogram of the given instrument. Later, one might use the phonogram cleared of them.

Finally: music can be determined in regard to five relationships; pitch, loudness, technique of performance, timbre, and polyphony. In regard to the last relationship, "designed sound" will apparently be greatly helped by constantly improving the technique of the "re-recording" of sounds.

(Concluded overleaf.)



By means of special apparatus for "re-recording," done purely electrically without any acoustic hindrances, all the sounds are re-recorded upon one phonogram of normal width. Some day perhaps, by means of re-recording, "designed sound" will enter into the regular symphony orchestra. It might enter the orchestra either as an unusual "soloist" or as a modest incognito, instead of some instrument which, in its normal state, cannot fulfil the desires of the composer (see the use of harps in Wagner's music).

"Designed sound" is included occasionally in the broadcasts of the Leningrad radio-stations. Special little films with "designed sound" have just been made for Soviet television. The experimental radio-station in Moscow, which after midnight (Moscow time) transmits occasional television programs, is soon to include in its programs small cartoon films accompanied by "designed sound." The first number is the *March of the Chess Men* with music from *Carmen*.

THE USE OF MULTIPLE FILMS

By H. E. Dance, M.Eng., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.E.E.

Loop films which are now considerably used for teaching purposes, both in America and Germany were being employed in this country by the author of the following article as far back as 1929. In 1922, when teaching at the Liverpool Central Technical School, he first devised a closely analogous method, constructing a modified "Wheel of Life" to illustrate alternating components of the rotating field of an induction motor

ONE of the most delightful applications of the film is in the illustration of physical and engineering phenomena, for in this field the film serves not only as a powerful teaching instrument, but also discloses beauties of action which are hidden in mathematical expressions and dormant in inactive diagrams. These beauties are often obvious to the trained mathematician and engineer, but the film reveals them to the student at a much earlier stage in his experience than otherwise would be possible.

The production of diagrammatic films of these types offers to producers an infinite variety of examples which enable him to display his ingenuity in planning the production to secure greatest economy in time and material. Dr. F. T. Chapman and the author, in collaboration, devised in 1933 a set of films to illustrate the effect of harmonic components of stator and rotor flux waves. The number of possible combinations of fundamental harmonics, and their phase relation was infinite, and even if the illustration had been confined to a few selected combinations the quantity of film required would have been large. Each film was confined to a single component of the field, and it was arranged that three films could be projected at the same time from a single projector. The set, as produced, was extremely simple in content, but it was one of the milestones in the development of the educational application of the cinema, for it pointed the way to increased economy in film and

wider range of picture than would be available if complete single films were employed.

Only rarely is it found necessary to use three films or more, but often two films can be used together with advantage. Economy in material is only one of the benefits obtained by employing multiple films; more important is the fact that it extends the control which the teacher can exert over the machine and the projected result.

In the first experiments, loop films were employed for multiple projection, but later equally good

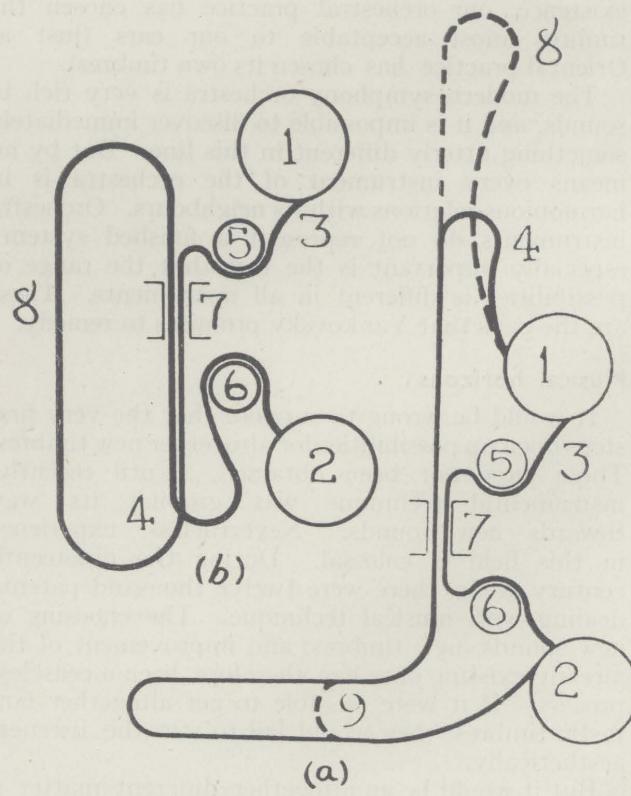


Fig. 1

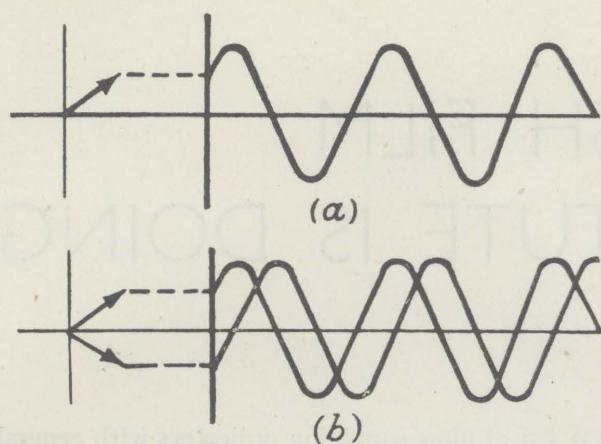


Fig. 2

results were obtained from films wound on spools with the added advantage that the control of the phase relation between the components was easier.

The method of running two films is shown in Fig. 1a, in which 1 and 2 are the spools, 3 and 4 are the two films, 5 and 6 are the lead-on and lead-off sprockets, and 7 is the gate. The two films are wound together on to the spool 1 and film 3 is threaded through the projector in the ordinary way. Film 4 is threaded through the machine, but it does not engage the lead on and off sprockets. It has very large loops, the actual lengths of which are determined by the cycle length of the film.

It will usually be necessary to support the loops, and any convenient bracket which is smooth so as not to damage the film will serve.

The rates at which the spools are driven is correctly determined by the film 3 and as both films are wound on and off together—necessarily at the same speed—the lengths of the loops are preserved. The phase of the film 4 in relation to film 3 can be changed by altering the loop lengths, as at 8 and 9.

In some cases it is useful to pass a single film through the projector twice so that two frames showing different phases of development of the action can be superposed. Fig. 1b shows the method of threading the projector with a single film so that the film passes through the gate twice. The phase relation of the two pictures in the gate is controlled by means of the loop 8. The other numbers have the same significance as those of Fig. 1a.

Two examples will serve to illustrate the adaptability of the method :

Fig. 2a shows a frame from a film which illustrates the generation of a sine wave. The action is that the vector rotates and the wave trace moves from left to right or *vice versa* according to the rotation of the vector—the film may be run either way. Two prints are made from this film and are projected simultaneously. A possible result is shown in Fig. 2b in which the vectors and the traces are displaced by the same angle. This angle—the phase angle—may be changed at will by displacing the films. For this illustration a single film may be run as shown in Fig. 1b.

Another application is shown in Figs. 3a-b-c. One film illustrates diagrammatically two power systems, the first comprising two stations A and B which are connected by two cables, and the second comprising stations C and D similarly connected. It is assumed that the system is alternating current of single phase with centre point earthed as this gives the best optical effect. The cables, when at zero potential, are shown as having a certain datum width. The magnitude of the potential of each cable is represented by increasing the width of the cable in proportion to a positive potential and decreasing it in proportion to a negative potential.

The current for the system A-B is represented on a second film as shown in Fig. 3b. The black and white sections move to and fro to represent alternating current. At any instant, the velocity is proportional to the current. The current for system C-D is similarly represented on the first film as shown in Fig. 3a, in this case the current being in phase with the voltage.

When the films are superposed the result is as shown in Fig. 3c in which the phase angle between current and voltage of system C-D is zero, but that of system A-B is determined by the relative position of the films. The impression conveyed is remarkable, for when current and voltage are in phase the observer is led to believe that the area, represented by black and white sections, moves continuously from left to right, and examination shows that this impression is dimensionally accurate, for the width of the area is proportional to voltage, its velocity is proportional to current, and the rate at which the area appears to move is proportional to the power of the circuit. If the phase of the current is changed by 180 degrees the flow is reversed. If it is changed by 90 degrees it is seen that energy moves to and fro, but that on the whole the resultant flow is nil, and this is an accurate picture of a circuit working at zero power-factor. The two systems are shown on the one film because it is convenient to compare the conditions when the power-factor is unity with the conditions for other power-factors.

Many other applications of the multiple film could be quoted, but these will serve to illustrate the value and flexibility of the method.

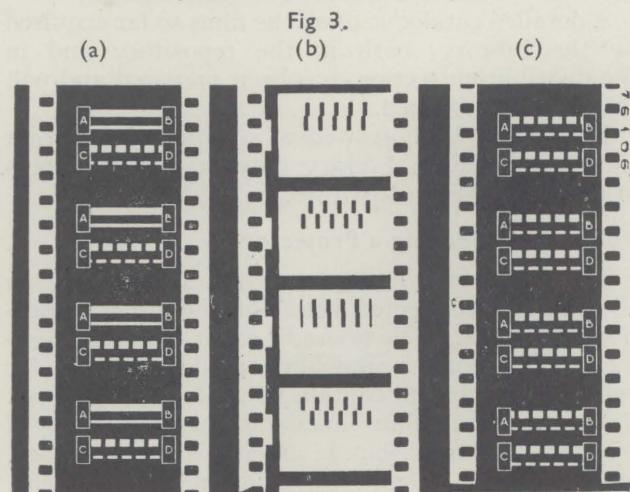


Fig. 3.

(a)

(b)

(c)

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

National Film Library—New Acquisitions

A NUMBER of important acquisitions have been made by the National Film Library during the last three months. Outstanding among them are *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Max Reinhardt production, presented through the courtesy of Warner Brothers; *Turn of the Tide*, directed by Norman Walker, presented by British National Films; *Man of Aran*, the Robert Flaherty documentary film; *Evergreen*, with Jessie Matthews; and *Rhodes of Africa*, given by Gaumont-British Picture Corporation; *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, with Charles Laughton, directed by Alexander Korda; *The Ghost Goes West*, René Clair's first British film; both given by London Film Productions; and *The Immortal Swan*, a film record of the life and art of Anna Pavlova. Such acquisitions as these are not only valuable in themselves but are a striking testimony of the cordial reception which is being given to the National Film Library's work. There is a growing recognition of the important part which such a library can play in emphasising that the film is acquiring a history which is worthy of study and research; and thereby in intensifying the ordinary film-goer's interest in the films which he sees.

Fifty films have been received for the distribution section of the Library and distribution has already begun. In addition to these films, which are of an educational character, a number of early films at present in the preservation section of the Library will also be made available for distribution.

A detailed catalogue of all the films so far acquired by the Library, both in the repository and in the distribution section, has been prepared and will shortly be published.

Films may be borrowed at a nominal fee from the National Film Library only by Full members of the British Film Institute.

Advice on Choosing a Projector

The Institute is now prepared to give advice on all problems connected with non-theatrical projection apparatus. The revised Leaflet No. 5, on non-theatrical apparatus and films, is almost ready for publication. It will contain the following surveys: (1) A survey of films available for each type of projector: 35 mm. sound; 35 mm. silent; 16 mm. sound; 16 mm. silent; 9.5 mm. and 8 mm. silent.

(2) A list of films supplying projectors with general price range for each type of projector from each firm. (3) A classified list, with prices, of 16 mm. silent and 16 mm. sound projectors. (4) Safety regulations. (5) A list of libraries supplying films of the various sizes. (6) Screens. (7) Darkening and ventilation problems. (8) General considerations affecting the choice of a projector.

Members of the Institute and readers of *SIGHT AND SOUND* are invited to apply to the Institute for detailed and specific information on any of the matters to be dealt with in Leaflet No. 5. It is hoped that members of the Institute and those using projectors and films for non-theatrical purposes will assist the Institute in the preparation and constant revision of its information by keeping it informed of their own experience and problems, since it is on the maintenance of contact with actual users that the efficiency of the Institute's technical services depends.

The Institute Now has a Theatre

The Institute has been compelled by the growth and needs of its work to obtain further accommodation. Premises consisting of a projection theatre, cutting and repairing room, film vaults, and offices have been obtained at 5, Denmark Street, W.C.1. All correspondence and enquiries should still be addressed to the Institute at 4, Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

The new premises will be used for the technical activities of the Institute, the work of the National Film Library, and the viewing of films by the Institute's Panels and Committees. The theatre, which will seat twenty people, has been equipped for showing 16 mm. and 35 mm. films, both silent and sound.

Education Panel : Reports on Teaching Films

At the meeting of the Education Panel, held on 25th June, with Professor Winifred Cullis in the chair, the Chairmen of all the Committees were able to announce that their Reports on teaching films were in the last stages before publication. Each Report will contain a summary of the findings of previous reports and experiments, and the general arguments advanced in favour of the use of films in the teaching of its own particular subject. An outline of the Geography Committee's Report was given in the last issue of *SIGHT AND SOUND*.

The Language and Literature Committee's Report will deal with three main subjects:—(1) The film in teaching pronunciation and intonation; (2) The film as an aid to teaching a living language; (3) The film as a background to modern language teaching. Under this last section special attention will be given to the use of documentary and dramatic films in foreign languages as a means of vitalising the language and stimulating the pupils' interest in them. In this connection the Report draws attention to the value of the programmes of French and German films arranged by the various branches of the Modern Languages Association. An appendix to the Report will contain a series of recommendations by Monsieur Stephan, approved by the Committee, on films which might be made.

* * *

The Report of the Science Committee is, in part, based on replies received from fifty teachers, all of whom had had experience of film teaching. The Report will include recommendations with regard to the production of science teaching films and suggestions of films which would be useful to teachers, and on how films can be used for classroom and background purposes in the teaching of science.

* * *

The Report prepared by the History and Arts Committee will contain sections on the object of teaching history and of the history teaching film, practical difficulties facing producers of history teaching films, and some suggestions of subjects on which films might be made. Important subjects dealt with in the report include historical atmosphere as contrasted with historical accuracy; the use of films in teaching contemporary history; the place and nature of the use of sound in history teaching films; the effects on history teaching in schools of entertainment films on historical subjects.

* * *

The Physical Education Committee were able to announce that the series of films on physical education had now been completed with the production of a film on **Analysis of Agility Exercises**.

* * *

Other matters discussed at the meeting of the Education Panel included methods by which the work of the Education Panel and its Committees could be improved, the reviewing of educational films for the Monthly Film Bulletin, the formation of an Association in England on the lines of the Scottish Educational Film Association, the preparation of subject catalogues of educational films on the lines of the catalogue of British medical films, and assistance which could be given by the Committees of the Education Panel in the work of the National Film Library. Mr. R. S. Lambert conveyed to the meeting the Governors' appreciation of the work done during the last year by the Education Panel and its Committees.

Dominions, India, and Colonies Panel

The Dominions, India and Colonies Panel has prepared and submitted to the Governors a report

containing a number of recommendations on the ways in which the machinery for the distribution and exhibition of educational films for use in schools and similar institutions within the Empire might be improved and the use of educational films developed. The preparation of the report was occasioned by the increasing number of enquiries for information, advice, and practical assistance being received by the Institute from schools and education departments within the Empire.

Films for Children

Mr. A. C. Cameron attended the twelfth session of the Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations on "Recreational Aspects of Cinematography" and submitted two reports prepared by the British Film Institute dealing with (1) what kind of films were best for children, and (2) how children could be enabled to see such films. Copies of the reports and of various publications of the Institute were afterwards circulated to all the delegates and experts present.

The Governors of the Institute have accepted a suggestion made by the Cinema Christian Council, that they should summon a conference of educational, social, and film trade organisations, in the autumn, to consider the question of "The Cinema and the Child" and to investigate ways in which children's needs can be more fully and adequately catered for.

Entertainment Films

Increasing use is being made of the Institute's Monthly Film Bulletin by educational and social organisations which prepare film notes for their own members, and by film societies for arranging film programmes and for preparing programme notes. The Institute is now supplying monthly entertainment film notes for two educational papers. The notes are specially written from the point of view of the organisations which publish the magazines.

Films for School Broadcasts

At the request of the Central Council for School Broadcasting, the Institute has prepared a list of films of all sizes which might be used to illustrate the Broadcasts to Schools for the year 1936-37. The list includes a number of films which the Institute's Committees have not yet been able to review; references to reviews in the Institute's Monthly Film Bulletin are given for those films which have been reviewed. Copies of the list may be obtained from the Institute on receipt of a 1½d. stamp.

Books on Films

At the request of the National Book Council, the Institute has prepared a comprehensive list of books on cinematography published in this country. The list contains 120 titles and is arranged under nine main headings: History; Criticism; Sociology; Education; Technique—Professional; Technique—Amateur; Scenarios; Law; Periodicals. Copies will be circulated on publication to all Full members of the Institute, and may be obtained by others on receipt of 4d. in stamps.

B.F.I. BRANCHES 1935-36

Branches of the British Film Institute, known as Film Institute Societies, exist to promote the objects of the Institute. Demonstrations of films and the publication of local film guides are activities of most of the societies. Further branches are to be formed next season and those interested in this work are invited to write to the General Manager of the Institute.

BECONTREE AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec. : R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

First season. The society's main aim has been to promote the use of films by societies and organisations in Becontree and Dagenham. The Essex Education Committee placed a 16 mm. sound projector at the service of the Society and fifteen film programmes were given for various societies. Many local societies have affiliated to the Society and are now booking programmes for next season. It is also hoped to arrange a course of lectures and demonstrations on film production.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec. : C. Walker, "Eskdale," Old Shoreham Road, Southwick, Sussex.

The Second Annual General Meeting was held on 15th June, and was followed by an exhibition of 16 mm. films. The General Manager and Assistant General Manager of the Institute spoke at the meeting. Lectures and demonstrations on educational films were held during the season, but attempts to find ways of organising special shows of unusual films at a local cinema failed. It is hoped to be able to overcome the difficulties for next season.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec. : Rev. F. C. Vyvyan Jones, 16, West Park, Clifton, Bristol.

First season. Activities have included lectures by Mr. R. S. Lambert, Miss N. G. Hussey, and a representative of Messrs. Spicer-Dufay, and visits to see selected films followed by discussions.

CHICHESTER, Hon. Sec. : G. A. Wilkins, Glengarry, Orchard Avenue, Chichester.

Second Annual General Meeting was held on 14th June and was followed by a talk on the National Film Library by Mr. E. H. Lindgren. The talk was illustrated by 16 mm. films from the Library, including *The Great Train Robbery*. The Society has been mainly occupied with the formation of an active Amateur Cine Club. This is now an independent unit, able to pursue its work with its own resources, and is at present engaged in producing a film based on the story of King Arthur. In addition all local events of importance or interest are filled and will be incorporated in a "News Item" for Chichester and the surrounding district. The educational side of the Branch's activities is well looked after by the Director of Education (Mr. Evan T. Davis) who is Chairman of the Society.

LONDON, Hon. Sec. : Miss Olwen Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, E.C.4.

Second season. Membership now 400. Activities included lectures by Mr. Ivor Montagu, Mr. Alistair Cooke (illustrated), Miss Lotte Reiniger (illustrated) and three film shows—silhouette and trick films; Cinema 1896-1915, including *David Copperfield* by Cecil Hepworth (1913), *The Front Page*, and documentaries. At the request of Mary Ward Settlement, Tavistock Place, the Society arranged a course of ten lectures on "Films and Film Making" by technicians and critics. The Sudbury Film Society, an amateur film club, has become affiliated to the Society. It is proposed next season to arrange regular Sunday film shows, in collaboration with the Film Group of the Group Theatre, in addition to week-day lectures and film shows.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT, Hon. Sec. : J. Norman Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

Second season. Individual membership of the Society is only 60, but a number of the local amateur film societies, including the Manchester Film Society, are affiliated and co-operate in organising meetings and demonstrations. Activities have included lectures by Miss Mary Field, Mr. Stuart Legg, and Mr. F. A. Hoare. It is anticipated

that the visit to the Society by Mr. F. Heming Vaughan, Chairman of the Merseyside branch and the appointment of Mr. Cyril Ray, another member of the Merseyside Council, as manager of the Tatler News Theatre, will lead to close co-operation between the two branches next season. Among the proposed activities is a week-end Film School for teachers in Manchester on the lines of the London Film School.

MERSEYSIDE, Hon. Sec. : J. A. Parker, 5-6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool 1.

The Society's third season has embraced film shows, exhibitions, lectures and discussions. The membership of the Society was again over 1,000, excluding the Junior Branch. Seven film shows were organised. Among the films shown were *Colour Box*, British documentary films, including examples of the work of Grierson, Rotha, Buchanan and Miss Field, *Itto* (France), *Galatea* and *Carmen* (Germany), *October* (U.S.S.R.). The Society was invited by the Management of the David Lewis Theatre to co-operate with them in developing it as a repertory and educational cinema. A survey of the history of the film was given by an exhibition of silent films, 1896-1915, arranged by the National Film Library.

Groups of boys and girls from ten secondary schools, which enrolled for membership of the Junior Branch, attended film shows and discussions at the Society's rooms. A film group of 15 schools was formed in the Wavertree district and monthly shows of educational films were held during school hours at a local cinema. Similar exhibitions were organised for 27 elementary schools at the David Lewis Theatre. On behalf of the Liverpool Council of Social Service more than 100 shows to about 15,000 people were organised at Boys' and Girls' Clubs, for unemployed, and other social service centres.

A lecture on "Colour Photography" was given by the late Mr. Walter Harding, illustrated by his own films and a film show was arranged of representative amateur films. An Amateur Film Unit has now been formed and begun work.

Lectures were given to the Society by Miss Mary Field, Mr. Alistair Cooke, and Mr. W. H. George. Lectures were also given by members of the Society. An exhibition was held of the work of Miss Lotte Reiniger who herself opened the exhibition and described her theories and methods.

At the Annual General Meeting, held on June 11th, 1936, resolutions, moved by Professor Lyon Blease and Mr. F. Heming Vaughan, were unanimously passed, deprecating attempts to impose a political censorship on films and the spread of the two-feature programme. The Society also urged that all short films, except news reels, advertising and teaching films, should be admitted to Quota.

NORTHERN IRELAND, Hon. Sec. : W. H. Welply, O.B.E., Randalard, Whitehouse, Belfast.

Second season. Membership 120. Activities included a Conference of Girl Guides on the aims and objects of the British Film Institute; a discussion on *David Copperfield* and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*; lecture and educational film show by Mr. W. Farr to the Federal Council of Teachers; lecture and film show on "The Films Behind the Films," by the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, the President of the Society.

SALFORD, Hon. Sec. : Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Salford.

The Society concentrated on promoting the use of films in schools by organising lectures and demonstrations and by carrying out various technical investigations and experiments on the cheapest and most suitable apparatus for schools. In view of the Society's work no attempt has been made to enrol a large membership, but meetings have been attended by large numbers of teachers.

SCOTLAND : PROGRESS 1935-36

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Joint Hon. Secs. : C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2, and Stanley L. Russell, 14, Kelvin Drive, Glasgow.

The Scottish Film Council of the British Film Institute, founded in September, 1934, has had a remarkably successful year. After the first Annual Meeting, Lord Tweedsmuir ceased to be Chairman in view of his departure for Canada, and accepted the Hon. Presidency. His successor is Lord G. Nigel Douglas-Hamilton. The Council is publishing a Monthly Bulletin, which has reached a circulation of over 6,000. It contains the Monthly Reports of Entertainment and Education Panels. The Entertainment Panel's Reports consist of reviews of films which the Scottish public is recommended to see. The Education Panel has been chiefly concerned with (a) assisting the Scottish Educational Film Association to form new branches, and (b) organising the reviewing scheme for educational films. Essential features of the reviewing scheme are (1) viewing committees composed of groups of teachers appointed by the S.E.F.A., and (2) subject committees composed of lecturers from the Universities and Colleges. At least three viewing committees will deal with each film and will try it out in the classroom. Films favourably reported upon by the groups of teachers will be seen by members of the subject committees, who will state whether the subject-matter of the film is satisfactory. The subject-committees will also view films produced specifically for the higher branches of education. Reports on films which have met with the Committee's approval will be published in the Monthly Bulletin of the British Film Institute and the Scottish Film Council. Displays of projectors and films were given by G-B Instructional and British Instructional Films in Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, the Royal Technical College, and Jordanhill Training College. In the autumn the Council hopes to repeat these demonstrations at Aberdeen and St. Andrews.

The Amateur Cinematography Panel took over the Scottish Amateur Film Festival which had been previously organised by the Meteor Society. The adjudicator was Mr. John Grierson, and he had more than 30 films submitted to him. The Panel is endeavouring to promote the formation of more amateur cine clubs in Scotland.

The Social Service Panel is assisting social service organisations to use sub-standard films. It organised a joint conference between members of social service organisations and the trade on the showing of unsuitable films to children. It took part in the formation of the Scottish Churches' Film Guild. A sub-committee has been appointed to co-operate with the Scottish Safety-First Committee.

Three new Scottish Film Societies were founded during the year. The Council, through Mr. Oakley, was directly concerned in starting two of them (Dundee and Inverness) and assisted the other (Ayrshire).

SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL FILM ASSOCIATION, Hon. Sec. : Andrew Inglis, 25, Tynwald Avenue, Burnside, Rutherglen, Lanarkshire.

The Scottish Educational Film Association was formed in June, 1935, by the coalition of the Scottish Educational Cinema Society and the Scottish Educational Sight and Sound Association. The first Annual General Meeting was held in Glasgow on May 9th, 1936, under the chairmanship of the President, Mr. J. B. Frizell, City Education Officer, Edinburgh. Representatives of the 2,000 members of the Association attended from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Fife and Ayrshire.

Demonstrations of films and apparatus have been given in various centres. The success of these exhibitions has been due largely to the valuable co-operation of the trade. Lessons given under classroom conditions were very successful in producing interest and conviction.

The S.E.F.A. also tackled the problem of providing tuition for teachers who wished to use projectors in the classroom. In large centres like Glasgow all Branch committee members were engaged for several months as tutors—as many as forty classes being held each week. Almost 700 teachers in the Glasgow area attended in groups of 25 courses of five lessons.

Saturday morning performances for children were given in Glasgow and Edinburgh cinemas. A typical programme consisted of *Black Beauty*, *Krakatoa*, *The Plover*, *6.30 Collection*, and a current newsreel. In this work the Association had valuable assistance from the exhibitor members of the Education Panel of the Scottish Film Council.

Many Branches have set up Study Groups who view, study and criticise educational films. These Groups will perform a useful function in the reviewing scheme outlined in the notes of the Scottish Film Council (see above). Some have been able to advise on the purchase of films for local film libraries. The formation of a central film library or methods of interchange of film between Branch libraries is likely to engage the future attention of the Association.

Experimental groups have also been formed to produce educational films in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Lanarkshire.

The increase in the membership of the S.E.F.A. has taken place mainly within the branches already in existence in June, 1935, but new ground was broken towards the end of the session in Ayrshire, and the membership of this youngest branch is now over 500. This augurs well for the development of the movement in Scotland in 1936-37, when it is hoped to form several new branches.

ABERDEEN FILM SOCIETY, Secretary : A. L. Stephen Mitchell, 15, Golden Square, Aberdeen.

The Aberdeen Film Society, founded in 1935, has already a membership of 750. During the past season it has shown the best of the Continental films available and "shorts" of an experimental or documentary nature. Lectures have been given by Miss Lotte Reiniger and Mr. John Grierson.

AYRSHIRE, FILM SOCIETY OF, Hon. Sec. : J. A. Paton Walker, 5, St. Marnock Street, Kilmarnock.

The Society was formed in November, 1935, and eight monthly meetings have been held on Sundays at the Broadway Cinema, Preston. Feature films shown have included *Thunder Over Mexico*, *Ces Messieurs de la Sante*, *Der Traumende Mund*, *Charlemagne*, *Jazz Comedy*, *L'Atalante*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*. Shorts have included Len Lye's colour films and documentaries made by Paul Rota and by the G.P.O. Film Unit. A feature of the meetings which has proved popular has been a fifteen minute interval for discussion half way through the programme.

DUNDEE AND ST. ANDREWS FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : G. Edwin Geddes, Scotswood, Wormit.

When the Society was founded, in October, 1935, the membership numbered 250; the Council confidently anticipates a considerably greater membership next year. Four programmes were given. Two performances were given of each programme, in the afternoon in St. Andrews, and in Dundee in the evening, the films being transported by car and ferry between the two towns.

EDINBURGH FILM GUILD, Sec. : N. Wilson, 17, South Street, Andrews Street, Edinburgh, 2.

Regular Sunday performances, as in previous seasons, were held throughout the season. The Guild has a club-room and library open daily for members at the Monseigneur Café, Princes Street.

GLASGOW, FILM SOCIETY OF, Hon. Sec. : D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

Seventh season. Membership again showed an advance and stands between 800 and 900. The experiment of having both afternoon and evening meetings was continued. The afternoon meetings were attended by 150-200 members. The films exhibited to the Society were not on the whole quite up to the standard of some of the previous seasons, but among notable successes were : *The Unfinished Symphony*, *Song of Ceylon*, *Remous*, and *L'Atalante*. The standard of shorts was particularly good. Lectures, as usual, were also given, the most important being that by Mr. John Grierson when he showed some new G.P.O. films.

The Monthly Bulletin of the Scottish Film Council was distributed to members, free of charge. *Sight and Sound*, *World Film News* and *Film Art* were made available to the Society's members. A new departure this season was the publication in the Society's programme of short articles on various aspects of the film.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETIES

CINEMA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL (Secretary: T. H. Baxter, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.)

The Cinema Christian Council is consolidating its position as a central co-ordinating agency for the development of the use of religious films.

A preliminary conference on the *Moral Standard of Films* and on the *Use of Religious Films by the Churches* was held at Lambeth Palace on May 22nd by special invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, President of the Cinema Christian Council. The Bishop of Croydon, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council, presided. Opening reports were presented by the Hon. Eleanor Plumer and by Mr. T. H. Baxter. Addresses were given by Dr. O'Donovan, O.B.E., M.D., M.P., of the Westminster Catholic Federation, the Rev. B. Gregory, D.Litt., and the Rev. Gilbert Shaw. Each address was followed by a discussion in which representatives of a large number of organisations took part. The Conference was of an exploratory character and was held in private. It was felt that the holding of the Conference had achieved a useful purpose and prepared the way for further co-operation.

Demonstrations of Religious Films which were well attended were held in May at the Central Hall, Tooting, the Kingsway Hall, and the Central Hall, Bromley. The Chairmen and speakers were the Bishops of Croydon and Southwark, the Rt. Hon. Sir Montague Barlow, the Mayor of Bromley, Sir Harold Mackintosh, and Mr. J. A. Rank. Each demonstration took the form of a service: hymns, led by organ and choir, and the reading of a Psalm, were followed by the new film *Canterbury* and *The Common Round*.

On Friday, July 10th, a conference on "Films for Children," called by the Cinema Christian Council and the Public Morality Council, was held at the Central Hall, Westminster. Dame Marie Ogilvie Gordon, D.B.E., LL.D., was in the Chair, and the opening addresses were given by Mr. William Farr (Assistant General Manager, British Film Institute), and Mr. G. Kirkham Jones (of the Battersea Children's Cinema Experiment). Representatives of a large number of social organisations took part in the discussion.

The recently formed Leicester Cinema Christian Council is to work in close touch with the Cinema Christian Council.

The proposal for a close co-operation between the Cinema Christian Council, the Missionary Film Committee, and the Religious Film Society has now materialised, and the two latter bodies are acting as committees of the Cinema Christian Council. Important developments are in hand, including the enrolment of Associate Members at a minimum annual subscription of 5s., to whom the C.C.C. will render service in many ways.

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY (Gen. Sec.: Rev. Stanley W. Edwards, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.)

The work of the Society during the last winter has shown very marked signs of progress and increased usefulness. The number of subscribing members, associated through membership of the *Guilds of Light*, has steadily grown. From all parts of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and from many continental and overseas countries enquiries have been received regarding the use of films for religious purposes. A Religious Film Production and Technical Unit has been formed under the direct control of the Society. Full studio camera, sound recording, lighting, and titling outfits have been acquired, and it is hoped that in consequence much new material will be available from the Religious Film Library of the Society.

During the second week of June, a Religious Film Summer School was held for three days at Digsell Park Conference House, Welwyn, Herts. More than eighty enrolled members and part-time visitors attended. The success of the School was acknowledged by all who attended.

MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE (Secretary: T. H. Baxter, 104, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.)

The Missionary Film Committee has had another successful season with the road showing of its films especially

Thro' China and Japan and the popular *Beginning at Jerusalem*. Outstanding efforts were a week's showing in Belfast, which was followed by a tour in the North of Ireland; a well-attended series of showings at Reading, and an extraordinary day's effort at Worthing, where over 2,500 attended the three showings in the Pier Pavilion and hundreds were turned away. There has also been a continual demand for the 16 mm. copies of the films; one or two copies have been purchased for use abroad.

The silent film with a lecturer still has a big drawing power and for propaganda purposes seems ideal. Two 16 mm. silent films, for instance, were shown to large congregations in the heart of the Scottish Highlands and were the only two during the season which the congregation requested might be shown a second time.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY (Hon. Sec.: Miss J. O'Sullivan, Catholic Film Society, 36, Great Smith Street, S.W.1.)

As a means of teaching Catholic doctrine and spreading Catholic propaganda by films, the Catholic Film Society has fully justified its formation. The Society works chiefly in 16 mm. and while it makes both silent and talkie films its insistence is on the silent miming film which only admits sound when it is required to help the mime.

In addition to the 12 films contributed during 1935 to the Film Library of the Catholic Truth Society, with which the C.F.S. works in co-operation, the Society now has to its credit a number of religious films on Prayer, The Holy Mass, and the Sacraments. Its latest production, *The Dominicans of Woodchester*, made by Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., was shown for the first time at the June monthly display.

These films have formed the main body of the programmes which during the past season have been shown at 60 displays in parish halls and Catholic Social Clubs in all parts of London, the audiences totalling over 30,000.

Besides the films on Catholic doctrine and practice, the programmes have included films on Catholic Foreign Missions, the Catholic Land Movement and Catholic Institutions such as the Orthopaedic Hospital at Pinner. In this way, information regarding Catholic activities is spread and support enlisted for Catholic causes.

The monthly public displays given at Millieant Fawcett Hall every first Wednesday throughout the season have attracted increasing numbers. Prominent among the speakers at the Society's lectures were the President of the C.F.S., Rt. Rev. J. F. McNulty, Bishop of Nottingham, Rev. Ferdinand Valentine, O.P., Chairman of the Society, Rev. Alfred Pike, O.P., Mr. Hilary Peplar, Miss Locket of G-B Instructional, Mr. Percy Harris of *Home Movies*, and Mr. G. H. Sewell of *Amateur Cine World*.

Production and projection classes have been well attended throughout the season.

It is also the intention to form a Mime Unit, running its evening class at the Society's rooms in the same way as the Production and Projection Units. Those interested are invited to communicate with the Society.

SCOTTISH CHURCHES' FILM GUILD. (Convenor: A. H. Dunnett, 121, George Street, Edinburgh.)

A public meeting was held in Edinburgh on May 21st to inaugurate the Scottish Churches' Film Guild. The Guild is inter-denominational and has been formed "to encourage the use of the film in the services of the Church, to advise as to the use of the film for religious purposes and to assist congregations and religious bodies by means of the production and supply of suitable films." Mr. John Grierson spoke to a large audience at a special "Film Breakfast" held on the same day, and in the afternoon, before the inaugural meeting, a demonstration of films suitable for religious purposes was held in the Monseigneur News Theatre. The programme included *Water Power, Housing Problems, Workers and Jobs, Night Mail* and a film illustrating the foreign mission work of the Church of Scotland.

FILM SOCIETIES: SEASON 1935-36

BILLINGHAM, Hon. Sec.: H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees.

Sixth season; seven twice-nightly week-day performances at the Picture House. Feature films: *Maskerade*, *Charlmagne*, *Hey-Rup*, *The Road to Life*, *The Slump is Over*, *Deutschland Zwischen Gestern und Heute*, and documentaries. Record attendance, at one performance, of 1,190.

BIRMINGHAM, Hon. Sec.: Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

Sixth season; seven Sunday meetings at the West End Cinema. Feature films: *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *Dood Water*, *Remous Jazz Comedy*, *Three Songs of Lenin*. Lecture on film history and technique given to English Club at local girls' school. Joint meeting with Midland Adult School Union, when Dr. Caligari shown, and discussion introduced by Mr. W. H. Auden.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Sec.: Miss C. W. Harley, Everyman Cinema Theatre, Hampstead, London, N.W.3.

Second season; six Saturday morning meetings at Everyman Cinema Theatre. In addition to the specially selected films shown talks were given by Mr. Paul Rotha, Miss Mary Field, and Mr. Humphrey Jennings. With the co-operation of the Divisional and District Inspectors, performances were also given at 9.15 to L.C.C. school children.

COLNE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, Hon. Sec.: C. Hargreaves, Greystone, Colne, Lancs.

First season; five Club nights held at the Savoy Cinema on week-day evenings. Feature films: *Maskerade*, "M," *La Maternelle*, *The Loves of Ariane*, *Le Quartorze Juillet*; and documentaries. Programmes have been well supported, and attracted non-cinemagoers.

CROYDON, Hon. Sec.: G. R. Bailey, 51, High Street, Croydon.

ETON COLLEGE, Acting Sec.: W. W. Williams, The Old Christopher, Eton College, Windsor.

Organised by committee of six masters and six boys. Membership over 300. Four programmes. Feature films: *Le Quartorze Juillet*, *The Doomed Battalion*, *Song of Ceylon*; documentaries and shorts including *The Great Train Robbery* and early Chaplins.

FILM SOCIETY (LONDON), Sec.: Miss Mary Brown, 56, Manchester Street, London, W.1.

Eleventh season; eight performances at New Gallery, Regent Street. Programmes have included thirteen French, ten British, nine German, one American, one Polish, one Austrian, one Swedish and two U.S.S.R. films. Feature films: *The Day of the Great Adventure*, *The Great Consoler*, *L'Atalante*, *Marchand D'Amour*, *Jofroi*, *Der Ewige Maske*, *Crime-et Chatiment*, *Three Songs of Lenin*; documentaries and cartoons.

FRIENDS' HALL AND WALTHAMSTOW SETTLEMENT, Hon. Sec.: S. Birchby, Friends' Hall, Greenleaf Road, E.17.

First season; six monthly programmes on 16 mm. film in own hall. Membership 320. Feature films: *Kameradschaft*, *General Line*, *The Blue Light*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *The White Hell of Pitz Palu*, *Aniakchak*; documentaries and educational films.

KINO FILMS, 84, Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

Started in 1934 to distribute and exhibit films which bear on modern social problems and would contribute to social progress. Now handling 40 films (all 16 mm. silent) including most of the Soviet classics. Total audiences for financial year 1935 exceeded 250,000. Production unit formed and now working. 16 mm. sound films to be added next session.

KNIGHT FILM CLUB & R.A.F. HALTON, Hon. Sec.: Rev. Brian Hession, Chandos Cottage, Weston Turville, Bucks.

An amateur film club. A series of film evenings (silent and talkie) have been given in village halls and in the Camp. The Club's latest film has been specially made so as to appeal to the general public and takes the form of an advertisement of the R.A.F. Expansion and deals with the life of an Aircraft Apprentice who trains at Halton. It is 16 mm. silent, partly in colour, and includes many interesting shots from the air and of aircraft and in the workshops.

LEICESTER, Hon. Sec.: E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

Fifth season; monthly meetings at Vaughan College. Feature films: *Dood Water*, *Ces Messieurs de la Santé*, *Episode*, *Das Madchen Johanna*. Lecture course by Mr. Leslie Cargill, film critic of the *Leicester Mercury*; lectures by Miss Lotte Reiniger and Ivor Montague.

MAIDENHEAD, Sec.: S. J. Clippingdale Watsham, 27, High Street, Maidenhead.

First season; five monthly Sunday meetings at Plaza Theatre. Feature films: *Ces Messieurs de la Santé*, *Der Traumende Mund*, *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *Paris-Mediterranée*; documentaries and shorts.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS, Hon. Sec.: T. Cavanagh, 8, Hulford Street, Salford, 5.

Work of the Society temporarily suspended, but resumed on March 14th, when 37th show was given. Feature film: *Three Songs of Lenin* and shorts. Hoped to recommence the usual monthly shows in September as permission has now been obtained for Sunday shows. Organised lectures for various societies and an exhibition of stills and film literature for Conference in Manchester.

NORTH LONDON, Hon. Sec.: H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, N.16.

Second season; six Sunday performances at Monseigneur Cinema, Piccadilly. Feature films: *Vampyr*, *Zero de Conduite*, *En Rade*, *Amok*, *Deserter*, *Men and Jobs*; and documentaries. Six public lectures: Rudolph Arnheim, A. Cavalcanti, W. H. Auden, A. Buchanan, Miss M. Seton, D. Carter.

PLYMOUTH, Hon. Sec.: M. Atkinson, Virginia House, Palace Street, Plymouth.

SOUTHAMPTON, Hon. Gen. Sec.: J. S. Fairfax-Jones. Southampton Hon. Secs.: D. A. Yeoman, J. M. Cameron, 21, Ethelbert Avenue, Bassett Green, Southampton. Winchester Hon. Secs.: Miss Ruth Keyser, C. J. Blackburne, 12, St. Swithin Street, Winchester.

SUDSBURY, Allan M. Tyrer, 9, Cranleigh Gardens, Kenton, Middlesex.

An amateur film club which arranges shows of 16 mm. classic and experimental films at its own premises.

TYNESIDE, Hon. Sec.: M. C. Pottinger, c/o Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.

Third season; eight Sunday performances at the Haymarket. Membership 826. Feature films: *Charlemagne*, *Song of Ceylon*, *Hey-Rup*, *Zero de Conduite* (twice), *Der Schimmelreiter*, *Jazz Comedy*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Three Songs of Lenin*; documentaries and cartoons. When Brothers Karmazov, *Remous* and *Maskerade* were likely to be shown commercially the Society omitted them from its programmes. Special children's Matinee organised in collaboration with Modern Languages Association. Monthly discussion meetings. Disney Exhibition attracted 1,677 people. Exhibition of the work of four Art Directors attended by several thousand (see page 36).

WOLVERHAMPTON, Hon. Sec.: E. L. Packer, Himley Crescent, Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton.

First season; six monthly meetings on week-days at West End Cinema. Membership 335; and non-members. Feature films: *Der Traumende Mund*, *Emperor Jones*, *The Scoundrel*, *Zero de Conduite*, *Le Quartorze Juillet*, *The Road to Life*; documentaries and cartoons. Three lectures and discussions.

TECHNICAL NOTES

FILMS AT THE BRITISH CHEMICAL PLANT EXHIBITION

A number of the exhibits in the Industrial Research Exhibit arranged by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research at the recent Chemical Plant Exhibition at the Central Hall, Westminster, were illustrated by short silent 16 mm. films, for the most part specially prepared for the purpose. In the Chemical Research Laboratory's exhibit details were shown of the apparatus designed for studying chemical reactions under high pressures of the order of 250 atmospheres and in this connection there were films showing exactly how the apparatus was assembled and used at the Laboratory. Similarly, a film was shown which illustrated the development, from the laboratory scale to the full work's scale, of a plant for extracting certain fine chemicals which had not previously been prepared in this country.

In connection with the National Survey of the coal resources of the country, which is being conducted under the Department's Fuel Research Board, a film showed the technique by which small representative samples of a particular coal are prepared for laboratory use and another illustrated how, for example, the fusion of coal ash was determined from these small samples. A third film showed the pulverised fuel equipment at the Fuel Research Station. Two further films illustrated the methods developed in the Department for the purification of effluents from dairies and milk factories and four others dealt with the manufacture of iron and steel, from the smelting of the ore to the fabrication of the finished products. Two of these latter films contrasted the primitive method of smelting, as used in India from time immemorial, with the present-day practice of a large ironworks. Finally, there were films illustrating the methods of the treatment of timber with preservatives and the testing of the fire resistance of timber.

The titles of the films are: *Autoclaves*; *High Pressure Research*; *Solvent Extractor*; *Iron and Steel-making and Finishing* (4 films); *Fire Resistance Test*; *Timber Impregnation*; *Fusion Temperature of Coal Ash*; *Coal Cleaning*; *Pulverised Fuel for Boilers*; *Coal Sampling*; *Treatment of an Effluent*.

ROYAL SOCIETY CONVERSAZIONE 28th MAY

TWO films were displayed on this occasion. The first on "Model Anchors" by Professor G. I. Taylor, F.R.S., illustrated the experiments which had proceeded the design by Professor Taylor of a novel type of anchor. The film made it possible to follow closely the behaviour of various miniature designs when pulled through a tank of sand. Defective designs were seen plunging steeply into the sand and then unburying themselves and turning over. The second, on "The Flow of Air round Aircraft" by Dr H. C. H. Townsend, showed the flow of air past various bodies mounted in a wind tunnel. The air had been made visible by the Schlieren method, after heating it up by discharging sparks ahead of the model. The behaviour of aerofoils under different conditions was shown including that of the slotted wing. This film forms part of an instructional film in the production of which the National Physical Laboratory has collaborated with the Air Ministry.

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL OF KINEMATOGRAPHY: STUDENTS' FILMS

ON the 11th June an exhibition was held of films made by students of the Kinematograph Section of the School of Photography. The films were on 16 mm. stock, and sound accompaniment was arranged by means of spoken commentary and non-synchronous discs. The results achieved in this way were very satisfactory and an exceedingly agreeable afternoon's entertainment was provided.

Seven films were shown:—

1. "Sea Drift," by John Eldridge.
2. "Life at a Riding School," by G. R. Kingham.

3. "Port Isaac," by M. Curtis.
4. "Racing at Northolt Park," by A. M. Angel.
5. "La Mer," by P. H. Drake.
6. "Young England," by A. G. Truscott.
7. Experimental teaching film, "The Production of a Studio Portrait."

Mr. Drake's "La Mer" was a very interesting experiment in what one may term "visual accompaniment." Studies of waves are arranged to move in harmony with Debussy's music. The method used was to time a gramophone record with a stop-watch, memorise the music carefully and cut accordingly. Mr. Kingham's "Life at a Riding School" held the attention well, both by its logical arrangement and by the pictorial beauty of several of the sequences—one especially of white horses trotting through a birch-wood remains in the memory. The whole display constituted a pleasant proof of wise guidance and intelligent response.

STANDARDISATION OF FILM-SLIDES

THE increasing use of film-slides is raising the question of their relative value in comparison with glass lantern-slides and of their standardisation. The main drawback of the film-slide is that its small size makes it difficult to select a particular picture from a stock by eye. Incidentally, it is also a hopelessly niggling job to hand-colour a film-slide. Its chief advantages are cheapness and portability. Moreover, the film-slide lends itself to the production by teachers of their own slides.

There are, at present, three sizes in circulation:

1. 36 mm. x 24 mm.
2. 24 mm. x 24 mm.
3. 24 mm. x 18 mm.

The horizontal edge of the picture is parallel to the length of the film in the 36 mm. x 24 mm. size and in the remaining sizes it is perpendicular to the length of the film. Of these sizes, it would probably be best to standardise on the first, as it is desirable, within the limits of 35 mm. film, to have as large a picture as possible.

The film-slides need not necessarily be shown on a special projector. A 16 mm. projector can be adapted for the purpose, in fact, one firm are now marketing an attachment for the purpose.

PRESERVATION OF FILMS. AMERICAN REPORT

THE recommendations recently made by the Eastman Kodak Company to the National Archives of Washington, U.S.A., closely corresponded with those made to the Film Institute by the special committee of the British Kinematograph Society. The American report lays emphasis on the desirability of the tins not being hermetically sealed, especially in the case of nitrate films, as the products of spontaneous decomposition do greater damage if they are confined in the tin. Acetate base is recommended for storage purpose rather than nitrate, and both fixing and washing must be meticulously carried out. Stainless steel with high molybdenum content is suggested as suitable material for the cans.

ENSIGN TITLER

MESSRS. ENSIGN have brought out an ingeniously compact vertical titling outfit. It is in effect a folding table, two ft. high when set up, on which the camera is fastened—lens downwards. The clip which holds the camera in position is supplied to fit either the Ensign "Kinecam" or "Simplex" (not both) and can also be supplied to order to fit other makes of camera. As the distance from the table-top to the titling board is fixed, it is not possible to use the table with lenses of extra short focal length, nor can tracking effects be obtained. Full provision is made, however, for both horizontal and vertical running titles. A number of useful extras are obtainable with the set.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

4, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.1. Telephones : Museum 0607-8

President : The Duke of Sutherland, K.T.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE was established in 1933 in order to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction.

ORIGINS

It took its origin from a three-year enquiry by the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films who formed the opinion that it was in the best interests of the country to establish an organisation which, amongst other things, should act as a link between the general public, the trade, and the cultural and educational interests ; and to act as a clearing house of information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad.

The report of the Commission was presented to the Prime Minister and the Government were impressed with the case that had been made out. Simultaneously with the passing of the Sunday Cinema Act the British Film Institute was founded as a Limited Liability Company under the Companies Act of 1929. To provide a foundation for its work the Privy Council has, from year to year, made it a grant from the "Sunday Cinema Fund."

OBJECTS

The Institute's objects as set out in the Memorandum of Association are :—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural, or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

ACHIEVEMENTS

During the period of its existence the Institute has abundantly justified itself both as a source of information and as a means whereby the use of the film in education can be studied, developed and improved. The Institute publishes cinema information in its periodicals and in such occasional leaflets as that, for example, which deals with types of projectors and films for schools, and supplies detailed information and advice on application.

There has further been established a National Film Library which preserves examples of the best films for the use of posterity and also lends out to *Full* members of the Institute copies of selected films.

The Institute has been appointed by the Board of Education to act for five years as the body to advise His Majesty's Government on the certification of educational films for free import into the country under the League of Nations Convention on that subject.

NEEDS

Though the major portion of the Institute's finances is the Government grant, it is still most important it should have the material support of all bodies and individuals that have at heart the encouragement of the best type of film and the full development of the cinema. Obviously the best guarantee that its work shall be adequately performed is a strong membership and effective branch organisation throughout the country. Branches already exist in almost all the chief centres.

MEMBERSHIP

The Institute being a company limited by guarantee, it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application (which is to be found below) and send it to the Institute's office together with their subscription. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded if desired.

Corporate bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. This entitles the organisation to the same privileges as an individual member, and in addition it receives five copies of each of the Institute's publications.

Members are entitled to receive all the publications of the Institute. These include the quarterly magazine **SIGHT AND SOUND**, **THE MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN**, together with a copy of the Annual Report and such occasional leaflets as are published.

Further information can be obtained on application to:—

**THE GENERAL MANAGER,
THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE,
4, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.I.**

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Governors of the British Film Institute.

I hereby make application to be admitted to membership of the British Film Institute and agree, if elected, to observe the provisions of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Rules and Regulations of the Institute for the time being in force.

I enclose herewith the sum of £1 1s. 0d. (or 10s. 6d. if after December 31st) and will pay annually on July 1st the yearly subscription of £1 1s. 0d.

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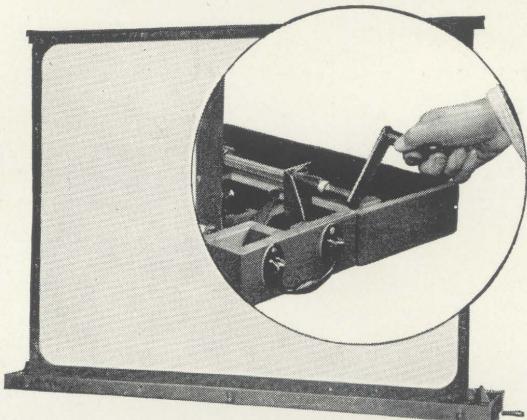
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